

ALL  
ABOUT EDITH











# ALL ABOUT EDITH



BY

MRS. JAMES MASON

"A sacred burden is the life ye bear,  
Look on it, lift it, bear it solemnly,  
Stand up and walk beneath it steadfastly,  
Fail not for sorrow, falter not for sin,  
But onward, upward, till the goal ye win."

FRANCES ANNE KEMBLE.

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THE REV. FRANK L. NORTON  
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# ALL ABOUT EDITH.

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## CHAPTER I.

"Some chord in unison with what we hear  
Is touched within us and the heart replies."

COWPER.



T was the early part of October. One of those autumnal sunsets that no pen can describe was fading in the west, and the shadows of evening were deepening in the recesses of the cheerful room where Alice Le Roy, a young but mature girl, was standing, listlessly watching the distant hills. She was startled by the entrance of her mother, a delicate woman, possessing the quiet and refined air of one who has always lived at ease and in comfort.

"Alice dear, has your sister Edith returned?"

“Why, mamma, I supposed she was home an hour since ; really you are too indulgent to that child, allowing her to ride without Matthew. I am afraid she will meet with some fearful accident yet. Madge is as safe as a horse can be ; but Edith is so reckless, she never looks where she is going, and now for her to remain out so late—it is really unsafe.”

“You know, Alice, I cannot help it. She did not like Matthew with her, and several times got rid of him by dashing down side roads, leaving the poor fellow to wander around for hours, fearing to return without her. You know she has promised papa to ride slowly if he would allow her to go alone. I envy her that exuberance of spirits she possesses, and often wish you had some of it.”

“But, mamma, she is large, and looks so like a girl of eighteen. She should try to control some of her childish ways ; but Miss Wilson is so fond of her, she is blind to her faults. If papa and Henry were more at home, they would soon discover room in her for improvement. I do so wish Henry did not have to go



to town every day. Will he be obliged to be away so much during the fall, mamma?"

"I hardly know, my dear. • Papa seems very anxious about business lately."

. . . . .  
N——, easy of access to the city, was situated on a superb bay, and commanded an extensive view. Airsley, the homestead of the Le Roys for generations, was one of those substantial old homes of which our country can boast but a few. A lawn, covered with mammoth locusts, sloped to the water on the north, while on the south a broad avenue wound through a dense grove of oaks and evergreens for fully a quarter of a mile before reaching the highway. Passing through a portico, entrance was had to a large square hall, at the end of which folding-doors opened into the library, where Mrs. Le Roy and Alice were anxiously awaiting Edith's return. Book-cases lined the walls, and the huge window was hung with crimson drapery. The warm fire blending with the twilight took from the room the look of cold grandeur, too often seen in houses of the present day. Everything was

elegant, but at the same time there was an air of comfort everywhere apparent, even to the Newfoundland dog lying before the fire. Alice had thrown herself into an easy-chair; her mother reclined on a sofa.

"There is Edith, mamma, laughing as usual." Rollo got up in a lazy way, and met the subject of anxiety as she rushed to her mother.

"Oh! mamma, I have had such a funny time. I knew you must have been worried; but never mind now. I have brought papa and Henry as a peace-offering. I could not help being late, and will tell you all about it at supper. Alice is dying from curiosity, but it must keep, my most serene beauty, for I must first get this dusty habit off, and then for the adventure."

Catching up her skirt she ran off. Mr. Le Roy, a fine portly gentleman of fifty, with a smile always on his face, shook his head, and, turning to his wife, said: "What a beauty she is, Lena! Did she not look superb, Henry, as she dashed ahead of us into the avenue? That habit shows her figure to advantage."

"Your face, father, spoke your admiration

plainer than words, as you lifted her off Madge. Such homage is spoiling her."

"I cannot help it, if it is. I only hope her future may be such as her beauty and guilelessness deserve. Where will she find a man to appreciate her? Really, the condition of the country is getting to be such that the future looks dark for every one; so let us take advantage of the present and go to supper, or Sunshine will be there first, and tell her story to John."

Hardly were they seated when Edith came in, leaning on the arm of Miss Wilson, her governess, laughing her out of the reproof she was trying to administer.

"Mamma, I knew you were wild to hear my story, so hear it is. I started out, fully intending to be back by sundown; so I only went round the meadow road, returning by the beach. I found my saddle-pocket full of caramels. Charlie Barclay put them there yesterday, when we were out with the Allen girls. He said girls could not be out half an hour without candy, to keep them from mischief. I would not eat mine because he said that.

"Then I bet you ate your share of Tutie's and Helen's," said Henry.

"There you are again, Henry; you are always ready to bet something of that sort. You, now, I warrant, smoke Charlie's cigars when yours are out, do you not?"

"But your candy was not out, only you wanted to save it to eat all alone. It would taste all the sweeter because Charlie gave it you."

"Why, my little daughter, what does that blush mean? Is there any association between candy and Charlie?"

"Now, papa, Henry is real mean, and is spoiling all my story. It was not about Charlie I blushed at all."

"Nevertheless she manages to get more red all the time," Alice quietly remarked to Miss Wilson.

"Do be quiet, children, and let us hear this wonderful adventure," said Mrs. Le Roy, requesting Edith to go on.

"Well, I found the candy; so I walked Madge while I ate some, as I could not eat caramels and canter at the same time. It

must have become dark very soon ; as it only seemed a few moments until the sun began to disappear behind the bluff. Then I touched Madge up and galloped as fast as I could, when, just as I got over Laurel Hill she stumbled and went on her knees. While she was down I jumped off, fearing she was hurt. She was up in a moment, however, all right. Knowing it was my fault for galloping up hill, I thought I would pet her ; so, offering her a piece of candy, I took my handkerchief and was occupied in brushing the dust from her nose, when, to my surprise, I heard a voice, and the next moment a gentleman stood beside me. Having been so interested with Madge, I had not heard the quiet rumble of the barouche which carried the stranger. ‘ You are evidently not hurt, miss ; but is your horse injured, that you are paying him such delicate attention ? ’

“ I was ever so confused at being found in such a plight, and I hardly know what I said ; only I believe I thanked him and answered, ‘ Oh, it is nothing. Madge stumbled, and I have been letting her rest a moment.’ ”

“ Then he asked me to get into his carriage and he would drive me home, and the footman could lead Madge. With that I looked directly at him, and I verily believe it was Mr. Gantly of the Manor. Is he home, papa ? ”

“ Yes, I heard so to-day ; but what did you say to his offer ? ”

“ Now, Henry will laugh at me again, for I mixed myself all up. I said Madge was not tired, and am certain I blushed, for I had no sooner uttered the words than I saw the mistake, and remembered having told him of letting Madge rest. Then he proposed that I should ride beside his carriage, upon which I said I was going the other way. He proposed finally that I should allow him to aid me to mount, and did it in such a very gallant way that of course I was obliged to let him. He then raised his hat, and remarked as I grasped the reins, ‘ I see you and your horse understand each other. She is waiting for the word to go, and as I can be of no further assistance, I will bid you good evening and wish you a pleasant ride.’ With that I turned Madge and dashed off in the other direction, not daring to follow



him. So I went to the foot of the hill again, which accounts for my being so late."

"There is nothing strange in your story, Edith, except your ungracious manner of receiving Mr. Gantly's kind offers, if it were really he whom you met," said Alice.

"Had you been caught rubbing your horse's nose with your handkerchief," replied Edith, "I think you would have been quite as much confused as I was."

"Not quite as much, I hope, my dear. But tell me what Mr. Gantly is like. He has been away ever so long, some six years, I believe. I remember I was quite a little girl when I saw him last. He must look almost as old as papa."

"Oh, no, he doesn't ; he has not a gray hair."

"Is that your idea of age, Edith ? I hope you can tell me if he is handsome."

"Oh, dear ! how can I tell ?"

"Then you have lost the faculty in twenty-four hours," said Henry. "I heard you criticising two of your dear friends very severely to Miss Wilson only yesterday."

"But, Henry, Mr. Gantly is different from any one I ever saw. He is something one

does not know exactly how to describe. Oh! I have it : he looks like John Halifax."

"So ho! when did the little girl meet John?"

"Please, papa, do not make fun of everything I say. Miss Wilson and I have been reading Halifax, and we think him just perfect ; do we not, Miss Wilson? "

"I did not express my opinion, Edith."

"Do, Edith, let some one else talk a little while," said Alice. "Please tell us, papa, about Mr. Gantly. I have often wondered why he traveled so much, and never seemed to have any relations. You have known him for years, and so ought to be able to tell us something about him."

"As to your first question, why, as far as I am able to judge, he finds travel more pleasant than being at home alone."

"But, father," said Henry, "he is not alone. His lawyer, or whatever he calls him, seems always to be with him."

"True, my son ; but one tires of the constant companionship of a single person, unless one is occupied ; and Gantly knows nothing at all about business. Mr. Parish attends to every-

thing for him. He was his chum in college, and one of the lawyers in the lawsuit in which he was so long engaged. By the way, that same suit proved the cause of Mr. Gantly's being on unfriendly terms with his family. At his father's death he was abroad, and the will left by his father was in some way made so as to leave in trust the homestead and other property, which was to be his ultimately; his uncle being in actual possession. Gantly contested the will, and won, after a number of years of litigation, since which time Parish has had entire charge of all his business. What I knew of him as a boy, some years younger than myself, was that he was always a fine fellow, very generous, and always took the side of the weak and oppressed. His tastes were refined. He played, painted, and was educated a physician; but what he is like now I am unable to say. I doubt if he would even remember me."

"Well, my dear, at any rate it is your place to call on him, as he has been away;" said Mrs. Le Roy.

"Now, Lena, do please spare me. You know that I am not a calling man."

"I will relieve you of that, father," said Henry. "I am anxious to shoot in his woods, and will make it an excuse to call, with Edith's permission. Don't pout, miss, it makes your chin such a funny shape, and I will promise not to tell Charlie. By the way, Willie Jerome is coming over to play billiards to-night on his own invitation. I cannot like that fellow; he will push himself where he is not wanted, and he is very fond of looking at the girls in that fascinating way I do not admire."

"Use the singular, if you please, Henry. He rarely looks at me; it is to Edith his attentions are paid."

"Oh, you poor little neglected one, does no one pay her any attention?" said Henry. "Well, we will bring the lord of the Manor down for you. I say, mamma, capital idea! we will ask him to the next musical. When will it be, Miss Wilson?"

"Next week, I believe, if convenient to your mother."

"What evening, mamma, quick, nothing like business, even in society matters. Oh, heavens! there's Jerome's horse, sure as fate."

“Well, Henry, Wednesday will suit me very well.”

“Then Wednesday it shall be. I declare John is bringing that fellow in here.”

The words were hardly spoken when the door opened, and a young man of five-and-twenty, with the most perfect ease, and “at-home” sort of air, came forward. He could see himself reflected in the mirror that extended the length of the beaufet, and a face never more plainly expressed perfect satisfaction with one’s own appearance than did his. He certainly was handsome, and thoroughly knew how to make himself a friend with ladies. Skilfully concealed egotism was a characteristic of his conversation, together with an easy manner of telling the person whom he talked with that he or she was all in the world that he cared for. What more dangerous trait can there be in a man who is thrown among girls just budding into womanhood, when the heart is so susceptible. Bowing to all, he walked to Mrs. Le Roy, remarking, “I hope you will excuse me, dear madam, for following John in ; but the fascinating picture I saw through the window

made the temptation irresistible. I am glad to see you looking so much better this evening."

"Thank you, I am feeling right well. I fear I must offer you rather cold coffee. We have lingered so long, it has been neglected."

"Not any, thank you. I have just finished dinner."

"But your ride may have tired you."

"In which case all the stimulus I require is your charming society."

"How jolly this is, girls," said Henry. "Will is going to devote himself exclusively to mamma, so we will go and play billiards."

Mr. Le Roy, seeing his wife was rather troubled by Henry's sarcastic remark, requested her to go with him into the library, and examine some new books he had just purchased. "You young people amuse yourselves with billiards for awhile; then we will have some music."

"I'm agreeable; come along, Edith," answered Henry. "Look at mother and Will, Edith. There they are at church work again. I verily believe that fellow is a hypocrite. I do not hear the best accounts of him in town."

"Now, Henry, how very unkind. Because



he is a favorite and dresses a little more than is necessary in the country, you are all down on him. But I'll stick up for him ; for he is the only one that knows enough to pay a little girl, as you call me, any attention."

" Quite right, Edith ; he does pay you attention, and more than I like ; and what's more, you must not accept it any longer. You will soon be in society, and then it will be a great disadvantage to have him so intimate with you. Charlie Barclay, the last day we were sailing, was ever so much provoked at him. He told me afterward he never was so angry in his life."

" Oh ! bother ; Charlie is so high tempered ; he gets angry at almost anything."

" I beg pardon, Edith ; I consider it something—your allowing gentlemen to pull your hair ; and then again, what was the necessity of his holding your hand in his, to show you when to throw your line ? "

" Hush ! here they come. I declare Alice has enlisted him into her missionary society ; she has just put down his name."

Henry walked up to Alice, and taking her hand, congratulated her on her success.

"I declare, Will, this is turning over a new leaf. Was Alice so fascinating, or do you consider it a speculation?"

"You hit it right that time. There is no other dissipation in the country at this season of the year, except going to church, getting up church frolics, and flirting on the way home."

"Mr. Jerome, I must protest against the expression of such views. Could you visit among the poor of our parish, you would soon see the necessity of church work, and workers also. It is all very easy to stand in your drawing-rooms and say it is the fashion; but the rector and visiting members see the distress."

"But are these people worthy, Miss Le Roy? Have they not squandered their money to bring on their destitution?"

"We do not take care of such. Dr. Cutler knows each family, the worthy and unworthy."

The mills have been closed for some months, with the exception of a few days, and how can they live without money?"

"Well, I will go to the next meeting and give my mite. But our game has been forgotten."

In a few moments they were all laughing merrily over Edith's strokes. They were as wild as if she had never handled a cue, and Henry declared he would not play any longer unless she did better.

"I was out so late, I am tired, and you all annoy me so. I am as nervous as I can be," answered Edith fretfully.

"Allow me to steady your cue for you," said Mr. Jerome, coming over to Edith, and almost putting his arm around her. Edith looked up, and catching her brother's eye, dropped her cue, declaring she was too tired to play any longer.

Alice, seeing that Henry was displeased, came to the rescue, and begged Mr. Jerome to excuse them, explaining that Edith's horse had not behaved well during her afternoon ride, so mamma thought she had better retire early.

"By all means ;" replied Mr. Jerome. "Henry and I can amuse ourselves very well with a cigar. But, Miss Edith, you must let me give Madge some lessons on good behavior again. She seemed a little afraid of my spur."

"Thank you ; but I can manage her. It was all my own fault. Good evening, and be sure to come to the musical, Wednesday." And with these words Edith left the room.

## CHAPTER II.

"The beginning of an acquaintance, whether with persons or things, is to get a definite outline of our ignorance."



ABOUT sunset on the following day, Alice, Edith, and Miss Wilson, returning from a walk, met Henry at the lodge gate with his dog.

"Now, Alice, we will see what Henry thinks of my hero," said Edith, taking her brother's arm; "is he not nice, Henry?"

"Well, I cannot say; he seems very gentlemanly, but rather sad and quiet."

"Did you keep your promise, and not tell him it was your sister who treated him so rudely?"

"I did."

"Well, I hope he will not recognize me; but will he come on Wednesday?"

"He cannot promise. He is obliged to go to the city to-morrow, and may not return

until late Wednesday evening ; but if nothing happens to prevent, will be most happy to be at your musical."

" Now I hope you are satisfied, Edith, I want Henry to tell me what the house is like, and what his tastes seem to be."

" As for the outside, you've both seen that often. Isn't it a fine piece of architecture ! It is simply magnificent. I do not know why, but it seems to be different each time I see it, and Mr. Gantly says it is so with him ; every day it appears more beautiful. The place wants trimming up, as he confesses, and also some one to make it lively. I wish you could see the inside. The hall, as you enter is grand. Instead of ending in a library, like ours, it extends through the house, and the massive winding stairs are off one side. The room I was ushered into was a library, very large, with quantities of books and pictures. On one side the fire-place took up almost all the space. A wood fire was smouldering on the heavy brass andirons, while a setter dog was asleep on the rug. At the other end of the room was an organ, at which Mr. Gantly was seated. I could



only catch a few notes as I came in, but they were enough to make me believe him a master of the instrument."

"How splendid, Miss Wilson; we can get him to play for us in church some time. It would be such a relief to you."

"I declare, Alice, you appropriate everybody and everything for that church."

"Well, Henry, is not that a part of my duty?"

"Perhaps so; but let the man get fairly at home first."

"I certainly do not intend to go after him, but if I get an opportunity I shall try and accomplish my end. Is there anything wrong in that, Miss Wilson?"

"Certainly not."

"Oh! while I think of it, Henry, I have some news you will rejoice over. I wrote for Maggie Allen to come and spend a few weeks with us, and she accepts, and will be here Tuesday."

"I am very glad to hear it. We must try to get up something for her; but I shall have to go to the city almost every day for some

time. Father is much driven with business, and seems to like to have me go with him. We can have jolly evenings, however, and I will try and stay home Saturdays, so that Edith may be with us. She must lose no more lessons, Miss Wilson."

"Oh, lessons! lessons! those eternal lessons! I am heartily tired of them, and those musicals are the very dread of my life. I am not allowed to dance and have a good time; and then to be called in, just to show off one's playing, is simply abominable. I am sure I shall break down Wednesday. The very idea of Mr. Gantly being there will be enough to frighten one to death."

"Well, that is strange, Edith. I thought you considered him so perfect."

"I'm sure I didn't say so; how am I to know?"

"You compared him to Halifax; and you said you considered him perfect."

"Then that is sufficient reason to be afraid of him. He seems to see right through one, and I'm sure he knows all about every thing."

"I must differ with you, Edith. If he knew

every thing, he would never trust all his business to Mr. Parish, or any other man. From what I can judge of him, he is a thoroughly educated gentleman; but, from a remark he made, seems to place too much confidence in the honesty of men."

"Why, I think that's splendid," Edith exclaimed. "It is horrible to suspect every one."

"The world is very selfish, Edith. Men seem to forget the bonds, either of friendship or honesty when money has any thing to do with their transactions."

## CHAPTER III.

"Notitia primosque gradus vicinia fecit."

OVID.

"The blush, perhaps, was maiden's shame,—

As such it well may pass :

Though its glow hath raised a fiercer flame

In the breast of him, alas."

POE.



WEDNESDAY proved a lovely day. Henry stayed at home in honor of Miss Allen's arrival. She was like a member of the family. Her parents had owned the adjoining park, but, in consequence of the ill-health of her mother, had been obliged to give it up and remove to the city. It had been a source of great regret to Maggie, as, being an only child, she had spent the greater part of her life with the Le Roys, and they all loved her as one of themselves. She formed a perfect contrast with Alice and Edith, their style of beauty being that which entrances, with black hair and eyes, while hers was be-

wildering, with the glamour of hair almost flaxen, and eyes of blue. No more accurate description could be given of her than Tennyson's lines,

"A daughter of the gods,  
Divinely tall, and most divinely fair."

The day was occupied with visiting the old familiar spots, a short sail, decorating the drawing-room with flowers, and a rehearsal of the music for the evening. Edith was not at all at ease. She knew the Gordon girls would play better than she possibly could; they had so much more confidence. After some persuasion Maggie had consented to take a part in a trio they had frequently played together. Their friends had all heard it with the exception of Mr. Gantly; but Miss Wilson thought it would be good to start with, as it would give Edith confidence. Every thing was ready. The drawing-room was lighted; Miss Wilson was running over some accompaniments; Alice, Maggie, and Henry were having an animated discussion over the last novel, when Mrs. Le Roy made her appearance with Edith, who

looked more like a subject for a sick room than a musical.

"Miss Wilson, will you take Edith into the library and brighten her up, while I receive the guests? I am afraid she is going to have a nervous headache."

"Why, Edith," said Miss Wilson, "what is the matter? You are as white as a sheet. Have you seen a ghost, or do you expect to see one?"

"Just in time, Charlie," exclaimed Henry, going to welcome a young man who had entered the room, "Edith wants brushing up; you go and tease her."

"Henry, do stop worrying your sister. Charlie, if you will, you may go with Miss Wilson and Edith into the library, for I know that your fun will bring the roses back to her cheeks if any thing will. There! I hear a carriage. Remember, Miss Wilson, music is to begin promptly at eight."

Charlie followed Miss Wilson and Edith into the library. Young Barclay was one of those right jolly, unselfish, and open-hearted young fellows one sometimes meets with. He was

tall, but not robust, with jet black hair and mustache. He was an only son. His mother had been an invalid for years, and Charlie had been brought up to pay her every attention, which he did in a most considerate manner. In fact, he seemed to manifest the same bearing toward all ladies ; so that, by common consent, a delicate lady, or one requiring much attention, always fell to his care. Leading Edith to a comfortable seat by the fire, he handed Miss Wilson a chair ; and, in the most natural manner, told her all the city news, drawing her attention from Edith, until she was composed. Then he talked about a plan he had for going to Europe and completing his course in medicine. His mother, he said, opposed this, as she wished him to remain with her. So he endeavored not to think of it seriously. Edith was fond of new plans, and Charlie always found in her a willing listener. They were soon earnestly talking about the possibility of inducing Mrs. Barclay to let him go for three months. Then he could extend his leave of absence, should his mother get no worse.

"Oh, do get her consent to this plan, Charlie. I know she will agree to it."

"But you seem more anxious than usual to have me go, Edith. You have always said that you would miss your tease."

"So I shall miss you ever so much, you are always so kind and thoughtful to the little girl; and I hate so to be taken to task because gentlemen talk to me. Henry is over-particular."

"He is perfectly right, Edith. You are not really the little girl you call yourself. I grant that you are young; but because your friends like myself, who have played in the same nursery, call you Edith, it does not follow that others should have the same privilege."

"I cannot see why."

"No; but you will after a few years, and then will thank Henry. But here comes your father with a stranger. I will finish this conversation before I go to Europe."

"I dare say you will," said Edith, mischievously, "for I doubt if you ever go."

"I do not boast of an extensive library," remarked Mr. Le Roy, as he led the way into



the room, "yet I take it as a comfortable one, both for the mind and body."

"I should judge so," said Mr. Gantly, slightly changing color, and bowing to Edith. "Will you honor me with an introduction to this young lady? then I will apologize for a second time disturbing her tête-à-tête."

"Why, this is my daughter Edith. Edith, this is Mr. Gantly of the manor. Mr. Barclay, Mr. Gantly; but why these blushes? I declare, Gantly, you are as red as Edith."

"Really, papa, I am afraid I have some cause; but—but you know I did not know you when we met the other day, Mr. Gantly."

"And you know I did not know you, Miss Le Roy. I am really astonished to find that the young lady who treated my overtures of assistance so cavalierly, and my friend's daughter, are one and the same person. Had I suspected for a moment that you were Miss Le Roy, you would not have been rid of me so easily as you were, I assure you. But I suppose you wanted to wipe your horse's nose with that cambric handkerchief, more than you wanted the companionship of an old gentleman like myself."

"Now, Mr. Gantly, you are more than severe. Madge's nose was dusty, and she does not look nicely with a dusty nose. And then you are not old. Suppose you were, I like old gentlemen."

"I suppose that is a hint for me to leave," said Charlie, trying to look annoyed.

"By no means, Mr. Barclay. But I suggest that we all get dusty noses, and see if we will receive the same attention as Madge. I can assure you, Mr. Le Roy, it was a sight well worth seeing."

"Now that is too bad, Mr. Gantly. I shall never forgive you. Come, Charlie, they want me in the drawing-room," so taking Barclay's arm, they left the two elder gentlemen to their books.

Edith had forgotten herself so completely that she played with more than usual self-possession, and succeeded accordingly. After a time Henry, Willie Jerome, and two of their college friends proposed some glees; but as the books had been loaned, Edith was without notes. After making a number of attempts to improvise, she gave up in despair, and was

turning from the piano to apologize, when she saw Mr. Gantly, and remembering what Henry had said about his playing, she asked him in the most winning manner if he would not do something for her.

"But I thought I was your enemy, and was never to be forgiven."

"Oh, I forgot about that. But if you will grant me this favor, I will both forget and forgive."

"Tell me what I am to do."

"Only make up some accompaniments for the glees. I can get along when I have notes, but cannot draw on my imagination."

"How do you know that I am able?"

"Henry told me that you played the organ. So, of course, you can do such an easy thing as this."

"Well, Miss Flatterer, we will make a bargain. I will play the accompaniments if you will sing a song for me. I lost the last one. Your father and I were so deeply interested in talking over old days that I only caught a few notes."

"I suppose I must; but if you only knew

how hard it is for me to sing before strangers you would not ask it."

"Undoubtedly I would. For any one to sing well must overcome that timidity, and the only way to do is to sing before strangers constantly."

So, taking his place at the piano, Mr. Gantly struck a few chords; then asking Henry what they wanted first, with the most perfect ease he played one after another of the college songs. Every one was delighted, as it took away all the stiffness of the evening. Edith sang very well, and although her voice trembled somewhat, yet it did not detract from its sweetness. Mr. Gantly seemed much pleased, but rather sad. He told Edith it brought old scenes so vividly before him. His favorite sister sang well, and he had always accompanied her, and she in return played his accompaniments for the cornet; but now he had to play alone.


"Why no, you need not," said Edith; "bring your instrument down here, and Miss Wilson will play with you. It would be a splendid arrangement; I am so fond of the cornet. Do bring it to-morrow evening, won't you?"

Meanwhile Maggie had been having a desperate flirtation with Jerome. In consequence of this, Henry had no evening lecture for Edith. He manifested considerable annoyance, but Maggie was the guilty party this time. It was generally understood that he was as good as engaged to Maggie ; so it may be surmised he had sufficient cause for his uneasiness. After the guests had departed, all seemed tired and occupied with their own thoughts, and in this mood they parted for the night.

## CHAPTER IV.

"Where is the man who has the power and skill  
To stem the torrent of a woman's will?  
For if she will, she will, you may depend on't;  
And if she won't, she won't, so there's an end on't."

LINES FROM A PILLAR.

UT, Henry, we were to have had a horseback ride this morning. Charlie and Mr. Jerome are coming over; so if you don't go, we shall have an odd number."

"Very true, Alice; but I must go to the city nevertheless. Father wants me."

"What shall we do, Maggie? Henry says he must go to town this morning, and that will break up our riding party, for an odd number is always awkward."

"Alice, you are a poor manager. I know of a remedy. Send Matthew with a note up to Mr. Gantly, for he rides splendidly. I have seen him on the avenue for two weeks past, and have often wondered who he was."

Matthew was accordingly dispatched with a note, and in due time returned with an acceptance of the invitation.

About eleven o'clock the party started off in great glee. Mr. Gantly, with Alice, took the lead, Maggie and Mr. Jerome came next ; then Charlie with Edith. They took a long ride, and on their return Mr. Gantly suggested their going through his place, and that he would show the party over the house. All were delighted with the plan, and turned their horses in that direction. The approach from the village was one of the finest in the country. For a quarter of a mile it wound up a hill, through a thick wood of fine old oak and forest trees, and then entered abruptly on an extensive plateau, overlooking for miles the surrounding country and bay. The view could not be surpassed, and exclamations of delight came from all the members of the party. After dismounting, they visited the grapery and hot-houses, and lastly the house. Alice was delighted with the organ. Edith, of course, wanted to hear the cornet, and upon Mr. Gantly saying that it was in his "bedlam," all

begged him to show them the place ; for a real bachelor's bedlam was, as they agreed, a thing of wondrous rarity, not at all to be lightly treated as a thing of mere curiosity. Accordingly he led the way to the top of the house, and ushered them into a large room, situated in one of the wings, and having windows on three sides. Bedlam hardly described the room. No less than half a dozen musical instruments were scattered around ; a half-finished oil painting rested on one easel and a crayon of a dog on another ; the principal table was covered with carvings and sawings ; on the walls were designs for brackets, book-cases, chairs, and all kinds of fancy articles, while a strongly made table, holding a pile of clay and a number of partly finished models of heads, hands, and other objects, conspicuous among which was the model of a cat, occupied the further corner. In short it seemed "chaos is come again." The whole party were delighted with the odd, mixed-up appearance of things ; and their host then and there received orders for carving, painting, and modeling sufficient in number and requirements to astound any professional artisan. He



laughingly took them, but said he feared they would come short of accomplishment, for he rarely finished any thing he began, as he was liable to tire of it, having to labor under the so unsatisfactory circumstance of never having the work criticized.

"Oh! if that is all, we will do that much," said Maggie. "Now I want you to model my hand, Mr. Gantly; and you will do it for me, won't you?"

"I don't think you would like to come to my dusty room during the process. You see I never allow a servant to enter the door, much to the housekeeper's grief. Every time I go from the house she begs me to leave the key, and let her have it cleaned, promising faithfully to have every thing left in its proper place; but I am incorrigible, and prefer the dust to remain; it suits my feelings exactly."

"But should you give up to such feelings?" said Maggie, musingly; "you may become moody from being much alone, I fear, Mr. Gantly."

"Yes, I am alone, truly," replied he, musingly.

"But whose fault is it, pray? Just think for a moment how charming this house would be, if filled with guests."

"But that is impracticable, for there is no lady here."

"And why? Is not that in itself an initial error?"

"I understand your inference, Miss Allen. However, who knows but that a life of not entire uniformity may have bent the disposition from any desire of such a spirited change?"

A blast from the other side of the room announced the discovery of the cornet. Jerome had found it, and forthwith requested its owner to favor his audience with a solo.

"Oh! Edith, look here!" cried Charlie, as he pulled a roll of brilliantly-colored designs from under an old trunk. "Church decorations, as I live! The very things you and Alice want."

"I am going to be bold, Mr. Gantly," said Alice, "and ask you to lend me these drawings to copy."

"Pray accept them, Miss Le Roy, and any

others you may see that please you. No!—no!—no thanks; the gift costs me nothing; the sketches are merely some I made for amusement while abroad. Did you see this sepia, Miss Edith? It is by Darley. I have many more of his in the library, some rather amusing ones. He used to spend a considerable portion of his time here, and I always made it a rule to collect his scraps.”

When half-way down stairs, Maggie declared that she must go back and have a final look at the sketch; she wanted to compare its merits, she said, with the other ones in the library. She must have examined it very thoroughly, for it was fully fifteen minutes before she and Gantly joined the rest of the party below.

“Mr. Gantly, you have been so indulgent to all our whims this morning, I know you will not refuse this last one,” said Edith, as they started *en masse* for their horses. “I want you to ride Madge, and let me ride your horse home; he is so full of life, and I can see he has a more easy gait than Madge.”

Mr. Gantly shook his head, saying, “Spite

has never been ridden by a lady; and, as Michael tells me, is much afraid of the blanket when he has occasion to put it on him; so I am very much afraid your skirts might cause some trouble."

Edith took his arm, and looking up at him beseechingly, said, "Dear Mr. Gantly, do not refuse the first favor I ever asked of you. I promise to keep close to your side; you cannot refuse me."

"As you wish, then, Miss Edith; but you must exercise extraordinary care."

The saddles were soon changed, and Mr. Gantly, with an anxious contraction of his brow, assisted Edith to mount, cautioning Michael to hold the curb until he was ready to start, at the same time advising Charlie to ride a little ahead with the others, so Spite would be less anxious to dash forward.

"Now, Edith, ready! Keep your curb tight. Do not let him know you are afraid of him. Let go, Mike."

Away they dashed. "Oh! this is glorious, Mr. Gantly; please turn to the left and go to the top of the hill. The others have taken

the valley road, and we can catch up to them soon enough."

"Careful, Edith! Don't get frightened; your hand is trembling; there is a sharp turn at the gate."

Mr. Gantly kept close to Edith's side, and they halted at the top of the hill.

"Now we must join the others. Keep him well in hand, Edith; he has his ears a little back, and I am afraid of the flapping of your skirt."

"He is perfectly splendid," Edith exclaimed. "I never had a more delightful ride; but his mouth seems a little hard."

"Down the hill they galloped, but on reaching the gate Spite put her head between her forefeet, and making a plunge through the gate started on a full run up the avenue. Edith, totally unprepared for this vicious movement, lost control of her reins, and the horse went madly on past the house, and made for the stables. Michael, hearing the approaching clatter, rushed down the road to stop him. Spite, thus cut off from his usual route, made a plunge through the trees, striking Edith against

a branch, which stunned and threw her off. The next moment she was in Mr. Gantly's arms.

. . . . .  
"Mrs. Le Roy, I feel greatly guilty for this ; but your daughter was so anxious to ride the horse I could not refuse her."

Edith was lying on the sofa in Mr. Gantly's library, the doctor applying restoratives, and Mrs. Le Roy, with Charlie and Mr. Gantly, anxiously watching the result.

"I apprehend no danger, Mrs. Le Roy," said the doctor encouragingly ; "she shows signs of consciousness already, and unless there is some bone broken will soon be herself."

"Can we take her home as soon as she wakes from this stupor, doctor? I deeply appreciate your hospitable offer, Mr. Gantly, but you can understand how much I would prefer her being at home."

. . . . .  
Edith was considered convalescent, and had for the first time been allowed to come down to the library. Her injury had not been at all severe, but a few days' quiet had been consid-

ered wise. Hitting the branch had fortunately broken the force of her fall, and possibly saved her from more serious injury.

"Henry, you are just as mean as you can be! Mamma, *did* I say any thing while I was unconscious?"

"Mamma, I protest. You are a witness on the other side, and the judge, Charles, has not yet called you. Father, did she not say, 'Oh! don't kiss me, Mr. Scott?'"

"Henry, how can you say such silly things? You know I hate Mr. Scott. Papa, dear, do make him be reasonable."

"It may be, Edith, that I didn't get the name straight. Tell me who it was; it may have been some one else you wanted to kiss."

"There's one thing certain, it wasn't you, and never will be, if you continue talking that sort of stuff."

"So! ho! my lady, you're improving, I take it—improving rapidly. Ah! here we have it, just in time. I have the right man now, I think. Glad to see you, Mr. Gantly. I want a witness to prove that Miss Edith Le Roy, while in a state of unconsciousness, caused by will-

fully riding a horse, which same animal she was advised not to mount, did, during the above state, confer certain instructions upon some certain gentleman or gentlemen, regarding the kissing or the non-kissing of her worthy self."

"I am too happy to be a witness to Miss Edith's recovery to appear against her. This is the first moment my conscience has not been on the rack since I carried you into my house. Edith, please accept my sincerest congratulations."



## CHAPTER V.

“ But oh ! what art can teach,  
What human voice can reach  
The sacred organ’s praise ?  
Notes inspiring holy love,  
Notes that wing their heavenly ways  
To mend the choirs above.”



R. JEROME, I claim you as my escort this evening,” said Alice. “ I enlisted you into our society, so it is proper I should introduce you to the superiors.”

“ I shall be most happy, Miss Alice. You anticipate my wishes.”

Alice, glancing at Charlie, could not see his look of gratitude, as he took Edith’s basket of worsted, and proposed that they should walk ahead of the party, so as to have a moment or two with Dr. Cutler before the crowd came. The doctor was such a favorite with the young people, as to make it quite a strife

among them, who should claim the larger share of his attention.

"I am glad you thought of it, Charlie; I have some news to tell Dr. Cutler, so we will hurry on."

Upon the arrival of Mr. Gantly, Dr. Cutler welcomed him heartily :

"I hope you are to remain long enough for us to have the benefit of your society, Mr. Gantly. I have only met you twice since I have been rector here. I must really censure you for leaving such a place as your's deserted, as it is. It may be well enough to keep it painted and in order, but it should be occupied also. It takes just so many members from our church, and we need every one we can get."

"I have been thinking seriously, doctor, of remaining for some time," answered Mr. Gantly; "and have all but made up my mind to ask an old aunt to make my house her home for the winter."

"Good! but why an *old* aunt? I should suggest a wife as more suitable for you. 'It is not good that man should be alone,'" replied the doctor, smiling.

"True, true ; but I am getting old, and am very quiet in my tastes."

"Then arouse yourself. It is never too late to mend. Come now, we will go and make ourselves agreeable to the ladies ; that is the first step toward reform. There is Miss Wilson waiting for some one to hold worsted for her. Offer your services. Miss Alice, I want to tell you how Johnnie Shaw's broken arm is getting on. He inquired for you to-day."

"I feel quite guilty for not having gone to see him to-day, doctor ; but we took such a long ride this morning that I knew if I went out again I should be unable to come this evening. Excuse me one moment, doctor, till I remind Miss Wilson to get some hints from Mr. Gantly about organ playing, as I see he is talking to her. Oh ! Mr. Gantly, won't you kindly explain the use of some of the organ stops."

"From what I have heard, Miss Alice, I should judge Miss Wilson more of a master of the instrument than I am."

"But you have had instruction in the use of the instrument, and I only took it up from my

knowledge of the piano, because the church was in such distress for an organist," responded Miss Wilson. "Then you know it is hard to play and lead the children at the same time. If you would play for us, we could have so much better music, for then I could do more justice to the singing."

"Really I could not play to suit you, Miss Wilson. Then there's another difficulty: I rarely go to church."

"But if you remain here you will go occasionally. Will you not go into the church now, and try the organ. We are very proud of it. It was purchased with the proceeds of the fair we held last year, so every one has an interest in it. But I wish it might be played properly. As for me, I understand nothing whatever about the pedal-base."

"If that is all, I will show you what I know with pleasure, Miss Wilson; but how do we get into the church?"

"Through this side-door, which connects with the vestry. Allow me to lead the way, Mr. Gantly. I will ask one of the choir boys to blow the organ until old John comes."

Mr. Gantly was much pleased with the instrument. He improvised for a short time, then played a number of selections from Mozart, which soon brought everybody, including Dr. Cutler, from the chapel. The player seemed perfectly unconscious of their presence, until, having occasion to fix one of the stops, Edith asked him if he would play Chopin's funeral march. Turning to reply, he saw the audience, and seemed quite embarrassed. Alice and Maggie were very profuse with thanks and compliments, and urged him to play longer. The organ was at one side of the chancel, with choristers' benches facing the latter. The ladies had taken possession of these, and the choristers were waiting in the pews for the rehearsal. After Mr. Gantly had finished, Dr. Cutler came forward and said he had a request to make.

"Certainly, doctor; what can I play for you?"

"The hymns for the rehearsal. They are new, and Miss Wilson can lead so much better if she is relieved of the playing."

"Now, doctor, I begin to think there is a preconcerted plan to make me organist."

"By no means, my dear friend. I never dreamed of such a thing. Nevertheless, I will start the plan now, and earnestly hope you will favor us with your valuable services."

"I cannot make rash promises, but will endeavor to be agreeable. What is the first on the programme, Miss Wilson?"

The rehearsal lasted an hour, and never did the children do such justice to their leaders. Edith had been so interested with the music and her duties, mainly the former, that Jerome had devoted himself exclusively to Maggie, but she did not seem to court his society as heretofore. Her eyes wandered continually in the direction of Mr. Gantly. That individual, however, passed the remainder of the evening explaining the pedal-base to Miss Wilson and Edith. Upon arriving at the Le Roys, Mr. Gantly's carriage was found in waiting, and he having offered to leave the gentlemen at their respective homes, the party broke up after planning a fishing excursion for Saturday.

## CHAPTER VI.

"To say why girls act so or so,  
Or don't, 'ould be presuming."

LOWELL.



H! it's too lovely for any thing," said Edith; "let's go to Bleak Island and have a clam bake, and fish, and make a regular day of it. I am just in the humor for something of that sort. Can we go, Henry?"

"Certainly, if it is agreeable to all."

"Splendid! Send over for 'Scotty' (I beg his pardon, Henry), Mr. Scott, to go with us. We will have such fun! He has been perfectly devoted to me lately, and I will get him to sing, 'Ever of thee I'm fondly dreaming,' and we will sing in chorus at the end, 'Mary had a little lamb.'"

"For shame, Edith. If it is to ridicule that fellow, I shall not ask him, and had you a particle of consideration for our nerves, you would

never ask him to sing. He has no music in his soul, and his voice reminds one of Milton's infernal gates, 'grating harsh thunder.' His element is certainly not music; but I understand he is literary, in fact a poet."

"Oh! what a joke," laughed Edith; "you remember Lessing's sarcasm:

" ' Tompkins forsakes his last and awl  
For literary squabbles;  
Styles himself poet; but his trade  
Remains the same,—he cobbles.' "

"Edith, you are actually incorrigible."

"Not quite; but I don't want to be *de trop*. You and Charlie are always busy with the boat; Jerome will be devoted to Maggie, if you are out of the way, and Alice must talk sense to Mr. Gantly. So unless you want me to be assistant sailing-master, get me some one to tease. Here comes John. John, go down to Mr. Scott's and give him this card. See, Henry, I have written it while you have been considering the matter."

So all necessary arrangements were made, and an hour later they were on their way to the beach.



"Mr. Scott," said Edith, handing him a lunch - basket, waterproof, bundle of shawls, sun - umbrella, and fishing-rod ; "if you will kindly take these things down to the boat, I will run back to the house and get another vail."

"Certainly, Miss Edith, with pleasure." It was plainly evident from Edith's manner, as she watched him staggering under his load, and his frantic and ungraceful efforts to keep the shawls from dragging, that her delay and forgetfulness was a plan on her part to furnish amusement for herself and the rest of the party at Mr. Scott's expense.

"The last to appear, as usual," said Henry, trying to look reprovingly at Edith, as she stepped into the boat.

"I couldn't help it, Henry," said Edith ; "I forgot my vail. But I don't know what I should have done, if it had not been for Mr. Scott ; you left so many things for me to carry."

"If you had got them ready in time it would not have happened."

"Don't scold, Henry ; if Mr. Scott does

not find fault you ought to be satisfied. Mr. Scott, you are all out of style. Allow me to reward you for your kindness, by tying this veil around your straw hat ; all the gentlemen wear them."

"Thank you, Miss Edith, you are very considerate ; but I hope you did not go back expressly for it?"

"Of course I did ; and why not?"

"Oh, I don't know ; but you are so kind."

"For heaven's sake, Edith," whispered Charlie, "do stop. I believe that simpleton would jump overboard if you should ask him."

"I have a great mind to try. What fun it would be!"

"Yes, certainly, for you ; but imagine how he would look, and what would we do with him?"

"Oh, wring him out, and hang him to the mast to dry," said Edith.

"Charlie, haul that jib-halyard taut. Look out for the boom, ladies, we are going about."

"There ; I've got that horrid hook caught in my glove. Mr. Scott, please see if you can get it out," said Edith.

Mr. Scott did probably as well as any one, as bashful as he, could have done, but his efforts proved futile. Just as he seemed about to succeed, Edith would drop her hand, declaring that she was tired holding it up so long, and back would go the hook.

"Don't be afraid; you don't hurt me in the least," said Edith, almost convulsed at Mr. Scott's nervous and unsuccessful efforts. "There; now you have it; thank you very much."

"Not at all, Miss Edith; but I fear I have ruined your glove."

"Never mind that; they are old ones."

Mr. Gantly, with Alice, sat opposite, very much amused at Edith's roguish winks and Mr. Scott's flushed and troubled expression, till Alice, not knowing what Edith would do next, said: "What is the matter with you to-day, Edith? I never saw you act so in my life."

"I am not acting badly; am I, Mr. Gantly?"

"Not badly, Miss Edith, but decidedly lively."

"Well, I can't help it; the rest of you are so quiet. Now just look at Maggie and Mr. Je-

rome. They have not said a word that any one could hear since we started ; and just see ! they are holding on to their lines for dear life, and their hooks are both lying in the bottom of the boat."

. . . . .  
"Here we are at the island. Have you any particular spot at which you wish to land, Mr. Gantly?" said Henry.

"None whatever; use your own judgment. I am not at all familiar with the island."

"Please, Henry, land at Long Point, instead of the Island, so that we can go to Lily Pond. It is just the time for pond lilies. Did you ever gather pond lilies, Mr. Scott?" asked Edith.

"No; I should like very much to see how they grow; it will be charming."

"Then we must certainly give you an opportunity to see how they grow," said Edith, giving a sly glance at Mr. Gantly. "Old Dennis keeps boats, and I will get one only large enough for you and me; and you can pull the lilies while I row the boat. Is it a bargain?"

"Most assuredly, Miss Edith, if it is your pleasure. But pull your line in quickly, for we are landing."

. . . . .

"Dennis, I must have that red boat. Please do not take it from me, Mr. Gantly," begged Edith. "It is just as cunning as it can be ;" adding, in an undertone : " You know I cannot trust ' Scotty ' to row, and these heavy boats would tire me out."

" But, Edith, I am afraid that boat is not safe for such a restless oarsman as you. It looks as if it could be very easily upset. Why not take the larger boats, and let one of us be oarsman for you ? "

" How kind you are," said Edith, saucily. " You want to spoil tête-à-tête number three for luck, I suppose."

" I would like to spoil it, if by so doing I could get Mr. Scott's place."

Edith blushed, but quickly answered : " No, no ; I must have the fun of seeing him gather the lilies. Come, Mr. Scott. This is our boat," and stepping into the little craft she seized the oars and pushed out into the pond.

The others did the same, with the exception of Henry and Charlie, who preferred the company of their cigars and old Dennis's amusing stories.

As a very brisk wind was blowing, Edith thought it best to row to the upper end of the pond before she stopped for lilies.

"Now, Mr. Scott, you see I am rowing right into that mass of leaves. You must look over the side of the boat, and when you see the flowers, pull them up. There's one now; don't you see it?"

"This is delightful, Miss Edith; do you often come here?"

"Oh! yes. But look sharp, or you'll tip the boat, and a nice time you would have if I went overboard."

"But I can swim, and would have the unspeakable happiness of rescuing you."

"I think it would be unspeakably unbecoming to me, my lovely hat and dress all drenched — Quick! there goes my vail. Oh! why didn't you catch it? Now, if you want to make me unspeakably happy, rescue *that*. There it is, in those leaves. It is the loveliest

one I ever had, and has not yet touched the water."

"But, my dear Miss Edith, how am I to get it? We are some fifty yards from the bush, and the leaves look so thick, I doubt if it be possible to get the boat through them."

"Never you fear about that; only get my vail. Here, take this umbrella, and when I get as near as we can, you catch it with the handle. It is positively like rowing through sand. My arms ache so I cannot get an inch further, Mr. Scott. Now lean forward as far as possible, and I think you will have it."

"Just a little nearer, Miss Edith; I have almost reached it," said Mr. Scott, balancing himself in the most ludicrous manner on the bow of the boat, the umbrella held tightly in both hands.

Edith shook with laughter; and the spirit of mischief was so strong in her that, without really intending, she jerked herself to one side of the boat, making it pitch, and almost instantly Mr. Scott and umbrella were at full length in the water.

"Oh, Mr. Scott! Help! help!" screamed

Edith, as the poor victim of her sport floundered up through the leaves.

Fortunately the water was not very deep, and before the others came to the rescue he had, with Edith's help, reached the boat, and a most pitable-looking object he was. His light clothes and faultless linen were a sorry sight. Nothing but his hat was safe. That had fallen back into the boat as he was thrown forward.

"Why, how did it happen?" all exclaimed at once.

"Edith, I *told* you to be careful of that boat. It is a miracle you were not both drowned."

"It was not the fault of the boat, Mr. Gantly," answered Edith, looking into his face. And he could detect a twinkle in her eye, although she had been frightened. "Mr. Scott was trying to reach my vail, which had blown off."

"Really, Mr. Gantly, Miss Le Roy is entirely blameless. I was so anxious to reach the vail that I suppose my foot slipped or I lost my balance. I am really distressed to have frightened you all by such a piece of awkwardness."



Edith busied herself with the oars, not raising her eyes to Mr. Gantly again.

"Edith," said Alice, "if Mr. Scott will trust himself with you, you had better row back to Dennis as quickly as possible, so that he can have an opportunity to dry his clothes."

. . . . .

"I am almost as good as new, young ladies," said Mr. Scott, joining them at their lunch an hour after the mishap ; "thanks to good Mrs. Dennis and my friend Henry."


Edith was helping Charlie open clams ; but immediately upon his appearance she came up, and, offering him her hand, begged him to forgive her for her thoughtlessness in placing him in such a dangerous position.

"Don't mention it. There is no cause for forgiveness on my part. The loss of the veil is the only thing to be regretted."

## CHAPTER VII.

"Be useful where thou livest, that they may  
Both want and wish thy pleasing presence still.  
Kindnesse, good parts, great places are the way  
To compasse this. Find out men's wants and will,  
And meet them there. All worldly joys go lesse  
To the one joy of doing kindnesse."

GEORGE HERBERT.

" AM now able to offer you the hospitality of my home, my dear Mrs. Le Roy," said Mr. Gantly, as he took her hand of welcome and bowed to the young ladies. "When I returned last evening I brought with me my venerable but still charming Aunt Rachel."

"You are very kind, Mr. Gantly. We will certainly take the earliest opportunity of calling on your aunt."

"Calling alone will not do. You must drop in to dinner or tea, and help me make the house look alive."

"Pray are we included in the invited?" asked Edith.

"Certainly. All must come," answered Mr. Gantly. "And as soon as the old lady gets things as she likes them, we will have a ball or something of the kind. What shall it be?"

"Oh, charming!" exclaimed Maggie. "Do have a fête. Throw open the green-houses and light them with Japanese lanterns. How lovely you are, Mr. Gantly! Will you really do all this?"

"By all means, if it will give you any pleasure. When would it be best to have it?"

"Some moonlight night," suggested Edith.

"How childish, Edith," said Maggie; "don't you know the place will look ever so much more lovely lighted with lanterns?"

"Really, girls, you are all very coolly taking the management of Mr. Gantly's entertainment into your own hands."

"Much to my relief, Miss Alice; and if, among you, you will only give me the necessary information about such affairs, I promise to be a most obedient servant in carrying out

all plans. A society affair of this kind has become decidedly *terra incognita* to me."

"Oh! Mr. Gantly. If you really mean to give us such a treat, why mamma will be your best ally; she'll help you greatly; won't you, mamma, dear?"

"Provided Mr. Gantly will assist us with the church music. I must protest against your remaining idle any longer, my good sir. Surely it cannot be any trouble for you to play. Music seems to be a very part of you. You seem to weave your melodies into august harmonies. I remember having read that 'when Jubal played his first tune, he opened the golden gates to a new realm.' The night you so highly favored us, I constantly recalled that passage. Every note seemed a spiritual development, an echo from another world. Dr. Cutler, please try your persuasive powers."

"I hardly think persuasion necessary in your case, Mr. Gantly. Every creature of God is sent into the world for a certain life-time, to do certain things. Our forms combine the same elements, but we are differently endowed. We have our talents, and we must make proper use

of them. You see the call for you, and the chance of your usefulness ; and I do not think you are the man to say : ' I have nothing to do with this want ; I did not make it. ' "

" I fear, Dr. Cutler, my reluctance is misunderstood. It does not arise from any unwillingness ; but I have long since given up the technicalities and intricacies of music. And furthermore, I allow my feelings to originate ideas and invent forms."

" And suppose you do ! Geniuses alone can create and compose. This acknowledged inspiration shows your fitness. Do you suppose, Mr. Gantly, that the divine song that long ago rolled over the plains of Bethlehem, and melted back into heaven again with the vocal host, had any original form ? You see I have plainly pointed out your mission. Be not a thirsty loiterer at the fountain of life, but make use of your talent. Remember Bacon's words : ' Men must know that in this theater of man's life it remaineth only to God and angels to be lookers-on. ' "

. . . . .

" Oh dear ! I am so tired waiting, Henry. We certainly will be late."

"How childish you are, Edith. Mother should not have consented to your going this evening; your element is the school-room. Too late! little ignoramus! One is not expected to go to a ball on time."

"But Mr. Gantly said we were to be there at eight; and now we have lost half an hour's fun. Even late as it is, Maggie is not half ready. How you would shout if you could see her promenading before the glass. She has enlisted Nora's services; Mary was not enough."

"Maggie dresses well, Edith; and to do so takes time, I should judge. Now, as to your dress, it is only a simple white tarlatan; nothing effective about it, so it can be put on in a short time."

"Of all horribly mean speeches! Well, before I would fairly worship a girl, as you do Maggie (and I don't believe she cares a pin about it), I should just go without one at all. And allow me to say, Master Henry, that you have not seen my dress yet. I am all bundled up now, but it is just lovely, and I didn't get into it in any short order at all, but

like a natural being. I began early. There they come at last."

"Maggie, *ma chere*, would you believe it, this little ignoramus has been working herself into a fever, because we have lost half an hour of the ball, waiting for the completion of your charming toilet."

"Oh! I'm not astonished. Her head has been completely turned since Mr. Gantly sent her that bouquet. She don't appear to understand it as an attention always customary, this being the first party *la petite fille* has attended."

Edith's eyes fairly danced with delight as she entered the magnificent drawing-room by her mother's side, and involuntarily exclaimed, "Oh! mamma, isn't it like fairy-land?"

It certainly was. Mr. Gantly had caused all the rare plants to be brought in from the hot-house. The room was lighted with candles. The band was hidden in an alcove by a screen of tropical plants. As Edith moved into the room, a murmur passed from one to another of the guests, "How lovely! She could not have been more becomingly dressed.

That pure white, with her lovely color and black hair! Some hearts will ache before long."

As Mrs. Le Roy advanced into the room (Mr. Gantly having offered his arm to Alice), a young man joined her. A very few words will describe him. He was slight, fair, had sandy hair, and a shadow on his upper lip, lisped somewhat, and dangled a glass with one finger.

"Oh! ah! Mrs. Le Roy. Charmed to see you this evening. Pray introduce me to your lovely daughter."

"Edith, Mr. Isling."

"May I have the pleasure, Miss Le Roy, of a waltz?"

Soon they were in the giddy maze of the dance. Edith was nervous, and begged to be excused from finishing it.

"Oh! charming," exclaimed Isling. "Then we'll promenade. It is so refreshing to find some one who cares to promenade; young ladies seem to think of nothing but dancing."

"I fear you misjudge us, Mr. Isling; but there is a time for every thing, and we come to balls principally to dance."



"True ; but a fellow finds it so hard to dance all winter, and then be obliged to keep it up all summer."

"I cannot see any obligation in the matter. If it be such a *bête noir*, why do you attend?"

"Why, you see I have been abroad for the past two years, and the governor says unless I show myself people would forget me."

"Oh! that would be sad, indeed," said Edith, putting her bouquet to her face to hide a smile. At the same time she caught Willie Jerome's eye, and he came immediately across the room.

"Miss Edith, you are engaged to me for the next?"

"I believe so. Excuse me, Mr. Isling. I hope you may recover from your fatigue before the evening is over. How thankful I am to you for taking me away from that simpleton. Is *that* what I am to meet in society?"

"I should hope not. But isn't this glorious? And you have made such a sensation. The fellows are all waiting for an introduction ; but you must not go back on me. I

claim at least four waltzes, and no end of promenades."

"How perfectly ridiculous! You will forget all about me as soon as you find Maggie. She is simply lovely to-night."

"I have seen her, and agree with you fully as to her appearance, which, by the way, I consider studied to assist her in captivating our mutual friend Gantly. Furthermore, could I be enticed from my present very charming company, I should have no chance with her. She has been with our host ever since your arrival, and has refused to dance any thing but square dances."

"How strange! Why, she has talked about the dancing ever since Mr. Gantly spoke of having the ball. But have you seen Alice?"

"Yes, she is in the library with a friend of Dr. Cutler's—a divine, I could take my davy. I am half inclined to study for the ministry myself. It is quite the swell thing now."

"Oh! how can you talk so?"

"Don't you think so yourself? Now take the case of that smooth-faced fellow sitting alone there with your sister. No one thinks

it out of the order of things ; but just let me try the same dodge, and see what would come of it! Oh! they are talking theology ; you say high church and low church. Well I must confess I entertain doubts about this church business. It covers a multitude of sins."

"I positively will not give you another waltz if you talk such heresy."

"You would not be so cruel. But come and promenade in the conservatory. This waltz is just finishing, and that beardless youth is coming toward us."

"This conservatory is just perfect—opening off the house in this way. I could pass the whole evening here in some certain delightful company," said Jerome, looking down at Edith. "But what are you biting that bouquet for? I'll not send you another."

"That's cool. You are not to be thanked for it at all. Mr. Gantly sent it. Besides, I was not biting it ; I think too much of it."

"Give me one of the flowers, won't you ?"

"No, I could not. I want to keep it just as it is, for you know it is my first."

"All the more reason, then, that you should share it.

"'One rose, but one, by those fair fingers cull'd,  
Were worth a hundred kisses pressed on lips  
Less exquisite than thine,'"

quoted Jerome, leaning down to grasp the flower. His whiskers almost touched her face. At that moment Charlie Barclay came toward them. He had evidently seen Jerome's motion.

"Edith, I have been looking through all the rooms for you. I hardly expected to find you here. Allow me the next waltz, will you not? I had hoped for one sooner, but was delayed getting from home."

"Remember you are my partner for the following one, Miss Edith," cried Jerome, as the couple moved off.

The rooms were very warm, so after a short waltz Charlie led the way toward the piazza. They were inclosed in canvas, he said, and there was not a possibility of catching cold.

"Now prepare, Edith, for I'm about to lecture. Don't you know that you 'didn't ought' to have permitted certain familiarities that Je-

rome assumed a short time ago. It won't do to allow him any slack rope, for he is one liable to take advantage of inexperience."

"Why, this is absurd, Charlie; Mr. Jerome is very polite."

"Polite! You hardly know him. He is coolly preparing to twist you round his finger. You can of course prevent him right easily if you only will, and you will do so, won't you? For I really think that the exclusive attention of a comparative stranger to so young a girl as yourself cannot be of advantage in the long run."

"Now, Charlie, don't scold. I can't stand it. It only makes me cross, and then I do exactly what I don't intend. I want to have a good time when I am out; that is what I go for."

"But, Edith, promise me not to be with Jerome so much."

"Oh! nonsense! How silly of you! He dances just to perfection, and I am engaged to him for three more waltzes."

"Edith, I beg of you to refuse him. Here he is coming now."

"I cannot, Charlie. There is no use asking."

And so it proved. The three promised waltzes were claimed and given, although the last one was started under a withering glance from Maggie. Charlie's early departure saved him from seeing such total neglect of his advice. Toward the close of the evening, when Mrs. Le Roy was marshaling her forces, preparatory to leaving, an inquiry as to Edith's whereabouts proved unanswerable. Just at the last moment Henry discovered her with Jerome, out on the end of the long piazza, where they had gone to see the moon rise. After Mrs. Le Roy had been safely deposited in the family coach, Henry anticipated Mr. Gantly, and escorted Maggie from the house. She was not in the best of humors, however.

"Four are too many in that coach, Miss Edith," whispered Jerome. "My carriage is standing but a step behind. Let me drive you home. It will be so much more enjoyable and less close."

Edith did not realize what she was doing until she found herself seated beside Mr. Jerome, as they dashed by her father's coach. Then it was that her heart almost stood still.

All the thoughtless rashness of the action rushed before her. What would her mother think?

“ Oh ! thou child of many prayers !  
Life hath quicksands ; life hath snares.”

“ Yes, quicksands enough,” thought she, as they passed rapidly through the manor gate, out into the broad highway. Jerome’s horse was fast, and he had some trouble holding him. So, to Edith’s relief, but little conversation was possible. As they drew near home Jerome proposed a continuance of the drive. The motion, however, met with so emphatic a veto that he quickly drew up before the door, handed her out, thanked her for so short a pleasure, hoped it would not be the last, and was off in an instant.

Edith rushed to her room, locked and bolted the door. The agony of her mind was unbearable for a few moments. What had she done ! How mamma would grieve at her ungrateful way of repaying her indulgence in permitting her to go to this ball ! She had really tried to avoid doing any thing likely to cause censure, and had miserably failed. She had done


wrong. She knew it. She knew that her mother had ample cause for chiding, and she looked toward this scolding with a sense of relief. But it did exasperate her to think of the many second-hand rubs she must infallibly get from here, there, and everywhere. It was so hard to be taken to task by a little of every body. If they would only let her alone she would get along much better. To-morrow! What would it bring forth? Henry would scold; Alice would put on that sanctimonious look; and, worse than all, Maggie's sarcasm! Mamma would be all right, however, and forgive her as soon as she put her arms about her neck and begged forgiveness. That last thought was reassuring. So, listening until they were all in their rooms, she crept to her mother's door, and soon obtained that unspeakable gift—a mother's blessing.



## CHAPTER VIII.

“Love took up the harp of Life, and smote on all the chords with might.”

TENNYSON.

“T may be she will listen to you, Mr. Gantly,” said Henry to his friend, as they were finishing their cigars on the piazza. “As for me, I am discouraged. I never was so mortified in all my life as I was last evening, and in consequence have hardly spoken to her to-day.”

“That is decidedly a very unwise course to pursue. I take it, you will manage Edith better by kindness.”

“What can I do more? I have begged her to act differently. I have maneuvered to keep her from Jerome, but without success. He flatters her, and follows her every footstep; and yet, confound the fellow, he does not do any thing that I can pick a quarrel with him for. Now, suppose *you* speak to her. She

will listen to you ; I know she will, for she thinks you know more than any body else."

" But one moment, Henry ; are you sure she doesn't care for Jerome ? "

" Care for him ! Preposterous ! If she knew what it was to be in love she would act very differently. Don't you see how heedless her actions are ? "

" Well, I am ready to do a favor, and all that sort of thing, but it is rather a delicate piece of business."

" Not at all. Simply advise her to act with more discretion. Now, here's your chance. You asked her to run over those new pieces, until you finished your cigar. I hear her at them, so we will go in now. I will take Maggie and Alice to the billiard room, and that will give you a clear field. While you are practicing, nothing will be easier than to refer to last night."

. . . . .

" That symphony never seemed as beautiful to me as it does to-night, Mr. Gantly," said Edith, as she turned toward him while he was changing his cornet shank.

"How do you account for that, Edith?"

"Really, I do not know, except that I have felt very quiet all day. Reaction of the ball feelings, I suppose. We *did* have such a glorious time. I did not imagine any thing could have been so beautiful."

"You did really seem to enjoy yourself. I was delighted to see you so happy. I fear you made some hearts tingle just a little. At least so I judge."

"Why, I hardly saw you all the evening. You were with Maggie all the time."

"It does not follow that I did not see you. And, by the way, there was another observer, who not only saw, but took pains to obtain a closer vision; I refer to Isling. The poor fellow dodged all around the room in the endeavor to claim you as a partner."

"Oh! that *petit maître*! Excuse me, but I must call him so. I begged of Mr. Jerome to keep me from him."

"Indeed! Do you not think it just possible that some one would have liked to have kept you from Jerome?"

Edith almost trembled. First she turned

white, and then blushed to the roots of her hair. "I declare this is too mean, Mr. Gantly. Henry or some one of my kind friends has been telling you of my—my—of last night. They are just as mean as they can be, and nobody loves me or they would not torment me so," said Edith, burying her face in her hands.

Mr. Gantly got up, and taking her hands from her face, raised her from the piano. Then gazing steadily into her eyes, he said, "Edith, never repeat that again. Some one *does* love you, and very dearly too. But, Edith, can you love me?"

Edith never knew what she said; but she found herself in Mr. Gantly's arms.

"I will see your father to-morrow. But we must now go to the billiard room, my pet."

"Oh, no, no! I cannot—I am so—I don't know what. But tell them I am tired, or have a headache, and am gone to mamma."

. . . . .

"I declare, Edith, this is shameful! Norah, do you not know better than to let Edith sit up so late when she has a headache?" asked

Alice authoritatively, as she and Maggie came into Edith's room some two hours later, and found the inmate having a lively conversation with Norah, her old nurse, while she was brushing her hair.

"Bless your heart, Miss Alice, I never saw her better or so hard to get to bed. She has been playing all kinds of tricks to prevent my finishing, she has. And, would you believe it, told me, if I did not stop scolding her, she would get married, and then I would have no one to fix :—the child, to be talking that way. And bless your heart, if she didn't ask me if I'd ever been in love."

Edith now screamed with delight, saying, "Do, please, Norah, tell them the story you told me."

"Oh! for shame, child. Do you suppose the young lady and Miss Alice would listen to such nonsense?"

"Norah, you make the most charitable excuse for Edith's faults. None but a child would so far forget herself as Edith does. Alice, do you not fear that Mr. Gantly's playing with her so much will turn her head?"

"Many thanks, Maggie. However, I propose doing as I like, and playing with whom I please," retorted Edith. "You are very properly jealous, because you cannot be with him all the time. Moreover, he likes to play with me, and that settles it."

"Jealous, *mon enfant!* why I have no cause for jealousy. You may be flattered by Mr. Gantly's attention, but, trust me, he practices with you solely for his own improvement."

"Alice, how can you stand there and hear your sister spoken to in that manner? Mr. Gantly appreciates me and my playing a little, as you may find to your sorrow, Maggie Allen," cried Edith, throwing herself on the bed and bursting into tears.

"Norah, you can quiet the baby best. Come, Maggie," and Alice led the way from the room.

The excitement of the last two days had been too much for Edith's impulsive nature, and this burst of weeping was, perhaps, the best thing that could have happened to relieve her. Had she had any doubts about her affection for Mr. Gantly, this discussion put them all

to flight. How would Miss Maggie feel when she found out her maneuvering had been to no effect, and that the child was preferred to the flirt?

## CHAPTER IX.

"For of all sad words of tongue or pen,  
The saddest are these, 'It might have been.'"

WHITTIER.



THREE weeks had passed since Edith's parents had given their consent to her engagement. They were very loth to do so at first, on account of her extreme youth ; but after several conversations her mother—finding that she appreciated the responsibility of the step she was about taking, and perceiving the reality of her attachment to Mr. Gantly—considered objection groundless, and the more so as she felt confident in Mr. Gantly's guidance.

. . . . .  
"Mamma, it's utterly impossible for me to finish this picture," exclaimed Edith, petulantly throwing down her brush, and pushing back her chair from the easel. "My heart is not in the work. Just look at those leaves. I declare it is a perfect daub."



"I wonder, Edith, that you feel so about this fair. Are you not afraid of discouraging Alice? She seems perfectly wrapt up in it."

"I would not discourage Alice for any thing, mamma. I know that she is doing all in good faith. But it does provoke me to see her so completely tied to Mrs. Bush's apron-strings. Alice is a mere cat's-paw, and will do all the work, while Mrs. Bush will go about boasting of the success of *her* fair."

"Do not judge too hastily, Edith. This fair is for the aid of the mill hands, and is entirely approved of by Dr. Cutler."

"Are you sure of that, mamma? Dr. Cutler cannot say it is positively wrong, and he thinks it best to interest such people as Mrs. Bush in church work."

"Then it must be best," replied Mrs. Le-Roy. "Besides, we require all the money to keep up the schools, and clothe those poor children."

"Very true. But don't you see, mamma, a fair is not almsgiving. It is projected for nothing but pleasure and vanity, a regular bargain for amusement. We always met the expenses

and raised all the funds necessary without getting back ridiculous pin-cushions and knick-knacks in exchange."

"That is very severe, Edith. You must not think all charity worthless, but that given with unmixed motives."

"Mamma, I cannot believe such money does any good. It comes from frivolity instead of self-denial, and it grieves me to see our mission supported by such funds."

"Why didn't you reason with Alice in this way, and I am sure she would not have taken part in it."

"I *did* try to, but she called me high-flown and a visionary."

"It is unfortunate, Edith; but you must not show any strong disapproval now. There is nothing really wrong in it, so finish a few of your paintings for them, just enough to show your willingness to be amiable, and when you are Mrs. Gantly you may be president. Then you can do what is best for the welfare of the society."

"It is hard," sighed Edith. "But I suppose I must submit. Painting is out of the question in my

present humor. I must have a run on the lawn with Rollo and to get myself in better spirits.

. . . . .

"How now, Edith; at your old tricks again? Do you scold Rollo because he gives me the welcome his mistress withholds?"

"Oh, Charlie! How glad I am to see you, and how well you look. But when did you get back?"

"Not more than two hours ago. In a hurry coming over so soon, am I not?"

"Hardly, I should say. You have been away so long. I almost imagined you had gone to Europe."

"You were not very far wrong."

"Why, you don't tell me that you are going! When do you start? How long are you going to be away? Of course you'll go by a Cunarder, won't you? Come, tell us all about it."

"How can I, unless you stop long enough between your questions, for me to answer them? Just take my arm, and we'll have an old-fashioned stroll, as I have a great deal to talk to you about."

"Oh, I can't wait for a long introduction. Tell

me. right away if you are going to Europe, and then we'll have the particulars afterwards."

"I hardly think I can get off to-morrow or next week ; perhaps not until spring. Nevertheless, Miss Impatience, I am going sometime, and have mother's consent."

"How glad I am ; but how came she to consent?"

"Why, you see Dr. Pease was at Newport with us, and won mother's heart ; some of his remedies had such wonderful effects on her neuralgia. Being my preceptor, he wishes me to have every advantage, and so put in a good word for me to mother, and obtained her consent to my studying abroad."

"Really this is charming, Charlie. What a perfectly magnificent time you will have ! But you won't go before summer, will you ?"

"Perhaps not, but the sooner I go, the sooner I shall get home, and I am very anxious for that time to come."

"I must say that's funny. You do all in your power to get permission to go, and at the same time are making plans to come home."

“What would our life be, Miss Wisehead, if we had nothing to look forward to?” asked Charlie, looking affectionately at Edith. “In my case, I hope and trust a great treasure awaits my claiming when I return.”

An electric shock seemed to pass through Edith. Her eyes were suddenly opened to a position of things she had not dreamed of, and she knew not how to meet it. In an embarrassed tone she answered: “I presume so. You will then take upon yourself the duties of your profession.”

“I will have a long life before I find a treasure in that, Edith. The treasure I refer to, is one of a higher value. Do you not remember I told you I would some day finish the conversation we began in the library that evening?”

Edith seemed stunned, and slowly answered “Yes.”

Placing his hand over the one that rested on his arm, and looking at her earnestly, he continued: “I will finish it now. I have always loved you, and now——”

“Oh! spare me! spare me, Charlie!” gasped Edith. “I never thought you loved me. It is

too late now ; I am engaged. Oh ! help me to do my duty," and sinking upon one of the lawn chairs she sobbed like a child.

It was some time before Charlie could fully comprehend Edith's broken explanation ; but an appreciation of his own position having been once realized, a decision as to his own line of action was soon reached. In those few moments the hopeful youth became a determined man.

" Edith, I understand it all. Being with you so constantly, I did not notice the change from childhood, and always thinking of your future happiness as connected with my own. I waited for such times as you should thoroughly understand the depth of your feelings toward me, believing you loved me."

" Oh, Charlie! Do not torture me any more. I do love you dearly, as a brother. I never thought of you in any other way. And now that I am promised to another, and have given him my love, I know you will help me to do my duty. Will you not ? "

" Edith, you show your characteristic faithfulness. Help you do your duty ! Yes, indeed,

to the extent of my power. Do not for a moment imagine that I will in any way lead you from it. God bless you, Edith, and remember that I claim the title and love of a brother."

Printing a kiss on her forehead, he placed her hand on his arm, and led her silently home.

Edith went immediately to her room. She seemed like one moving in a dream, to whom comes far-away thoughts of sweetness, while the path of duty stretches out narrow and distinct before her. Her trials and troubles heretofore had been those of ordinary everyday life, which she could take to her mother, while she asked for advice and comfort ; but this was her first real grief, to be buried in the depths of her own heart, and so completely entombed that no one should be wronged by its coming or its departure.

## CHAPTER X.

"What was to him the squander'd wealth?  
What was to him the burden of the land,  
The lavish'd misery?  
He did but speak his will,  
And like the blasting siroc of the sands,  
The ruin of the royal voice  
Found its way everywhere."

SOUTHEY.



EDITH had been a bride for some weeks. Her life seemed one long day of happiness. Not only was she the joy of every one's heart, but all nature seemed to smile on her, and clothe itself with the fairest flowers and brightest sunshine. The wedding had been the most elegant one of the season. Simply to say the bride was beautiful, would fail to award her justice. An ethereal halo seemed to surround her as she assumed the sacred promise of her life. From that day forward Mr. Gantly apparently had but one thought, and that



was for her happiness. The Manor had been thoroughly renovated, and Edith's boudoir was a miniature fairy-land. Henry surprised her one morning in her dainty retreat, reclining on a lounge of the palest blue. In her delicate white morning dress she looked so exceedingly picturesque that her brother paused before expelling the vision by an intrusion of his masculine presence. He hesitated a moment on the threshold, then came forward and kissed her on both cheeks, at the same time saying : " I know some one who takes the full benefit of luxury."

" Henry, would you believe it, I was at that moment thinking that I was almost too happy, and had almost too much luxury."

" Time enough for that, Edith. Do not borrow trouble. It comes without an invitation. I came to talk to you about Charlie ; I cannot understand it."

" Understand what, Henry ?"

" That's what I am going to tell you. The night that you were married, I saw a gentleman standing in the church porch. Something in his figure attracted my attention, and as we passed I looked sharply at him. It must have

been Charlie—I could swear it was. His hat was slouched over his eyes, and he bent forward and looked into your face as you passed.”

“Impossible, Henry. I should have noticed him ; and you remember he told you he was to sail the early part of last month.”

“The fact of your not noticing him goes for nothing, and I doubt if you could have recognized me, as you walked into the church, you were so abstracted. No, no ! I was certain of what I saw, and it has worried me ever since. Yesterday I went to see Wood, purposely to find out about that sailing business, and he told me that Charlie had been so very much interested in some cases lately, that he had found it impossible to leave before the last of the month ; and, to cap all, I found by looking up the old papers it was not until two days after the wedding that he sailed. So now I am convinced that it was he I noticed. But what bothers me is that I cannot comprehend why he, our dearest friend, should act so strangely, and not come to your wedding—at least should have come in *that* way.”

"You must have imagined it, Henry," said Edith listlessly, and yet in her heart she felt certain it was too true.

"Imagination! Not a bit of it. I believe the fellow is eccentric. Wood says he has been looking very poorly of late, and has worked like a dog among the poor. He thinks him more calculated for a clergyman than any thing else. Now I'm going to leave you, and hunt up Mr. Gantly. Do you know where he is?"

"I think he is in the library writing, and, if I mistake not, wants to see you, from the way he inquired if you would be up this morning."

Mr. Gantly was seated at a large desk smoking, and surrounded by a quantity of papers. As Henry came into the room he greeted him heartily. "I am so glad you came up, Henry. I have an annoying piece of business to ask you about. But have you seen Edith?"

"Yes. And I find her looking more lovely than ever. But what can I do for you? You seem to have plenty of papers about you."

"I should say so; and for the life of me, I can't make any sense out of them. I never was calculated for a business man, and can-

not turn myself into one at this late day. You see Parish attends to every thing, and keeps things straight ; but it seems that I should have sent him word about my marrying a minor. It really never entered my head. It is really quite laughable, is it not ? ”

“ Hardly laughable,” said Henry ; “ rather troublesome, if you have any conveyances to make.”

“ That is just it, and I should never have thought of it had not Craft & Co. sent me some papers that it was necessary for Edith to sign. Being a married man now, my wife would have to appear as a party in a suit they are contesting for me. Upon the notary asking her age, I told him she was seventeen. He smiled, and said he had had a delightful trip, but it would be of no benefit to his firm as my wife’s signature was not good until she came of age. Craft wrote immediately to Parish, and here is his letter to me :—

“ ‘ MY DEAR GANTLY :—When I left home every thing was in good shape, as you remember, and, for that matter, you were yourself. I

had no more thought of your marrying than I had of taking such a foolish step myself. But enough of that. I wrote you my congratulations, etc. However, judge of my astonishment yesterday, upon receiving a letter from Craft, stating your wife to be a child of seventeen. I don't think you fully comprehend the difficulty of the position. But what is cannot be helped, so we must make the best of it. I will return as soon as possible, and set things straight if I can. You see that suit against the estate is important, involving as it does so large an amount of real property, and it is necessarily very expensive to carry on. Furthermore, your property is mostly in real estate, and cannot now be advantageously sold or mortgaged to meet expenses until *madame* is of age. Craft wrote me a very short letter the other day, saying his time was too valuable to waste, and he could not run the risk of waiting four years for payment. He insisted upon my attending to the business at once, as you seem to have more ideas about love than of affairs like this. He was rather impudent, I confess. But you see these men get very disagreeable if you touch

their pockets. Your business has kept me tied down so tight the past few years that I *had* hoped to have had a little rest. But I fear I must now go and do some of it over again. I may be home by the next steamer. Have had a charming time. I ran across your cousin Depuy a short time since at Brighton. He looked as if he had been living rather high. Also went to call on your friend Madame De Lancey, and had a very pleasant visit. She sent a number of messages, which I will deliver personally. I hope you have taken good care of the place, and of Spite, as I want to ride when I get home. Regards and congratulations to your bride, and believe me as ever, old fellow,

“N. P.”

“This is rather serious, Mr. Gantly, unless you have the control of large funds to carry your property until Edith’s majority. How about that?”

“Really I don’t know. There was considerable personal property when Parish got it from the estate; but in what form it is now, I hardly know; but I always had more than I

wanted, so when he gets home it will be all right. This Craft will be the only bother. He is very arbitrary, and if he makes up his mind to any thing we will have to give in to him or lose the case."

"Rather bad, that; but I know so little about law. Do you trust every thing to Parish? He seems to speak of things almost as if they were his own."

"Why, certainly. He has worked hard for me, and takes more interest in this business than I do, and being bachelors we have always been together and are as intimate as brothers."

"I hardly think there are many men honest enough to have the entire control of an estate like yours."

"Very true, Henry; but Parish is one in a thousand. However, this is not very agreeable work, and my little wife must be getting lonely, so we will go and lunch with her."

## CHAPTER XI.

"How oft the sight of means to do ill deeds,  
Makes ill deeds done !"



R. PARISH arrived, according to promise, a few weeks after, and spent several days at the manor. He was a society man, fine looking, and a great favorite with ladies, for he had the faculty of adapting himself to the tastes and pleasures of those he was with, and consequently made friends rapidly. To all appearances he was soon deeply interested in church work (as that was Edith's and *now* her husband's pleasure), and any plan Edith proposed always received his hearty support, no matter what the cost. He evidently admired her greatly.

"Really, Gantly," said Mr. Parish, coming into the library with an open letter in his hand, some three weeks after his return, "I do not know what we are going to do with Craft. He



is threatening to throw the suit aside, unless some immediate arrangement is made to meet the expenses as they occur. I have all the other matters fixed, and, as you know, have taken the risk of being security for you, in order to raise money sufficient for current expenses until your wife shall be of age. But this matter will take so much money, I do not feel like shouldering it. We never can tell what may happen if Craft loses the case, with all that is sunk in it. He hints at a kind of partnership in the matter. I will read you what he says:—‘It being such a long and expensive litigation, we do not feel authorized in carrying it on without the certainty of the money for expenses being forthcoming as those expenses occur. Unless Mr. Gantly can make such an arrangement, we must give the case up. Or, being familiar with his distaste for business, we might take an assignment of the property for a given sum, Mr. Gantly signing an agreement that, at the coming of age of his wife, she shall sign the deed with him. This releases him from all further anxiety. We pay him the sum agreed to, when a clear

title is handed to us, and bear all expenses. Inform us of your client's wishes.'

" 'Yours,

" 'CRAFT & Co.'"

"Well, that seems fair enough, Parish ; is it not? "

"I have not made up my mind. The property is valuable, if recovered. But we have not the money to carry on such a suit now, unless I tie up your present lands too much. Then so much accumulating interest eats up one's income, and further, a wife rather adds to our expense," said Parish, smiling.

"There will be property enough, Parish, even if this be lost. So make the best arrangement you can."

Parish went off whistling, and thinking to himself how little his friend knew of the world, and how grasping men were.

"Be it so ; I can't help it. It will give us the use of a few thousands more. I risked rather more than I should have in that confounded —— stock. Then they have cleaned me out several times at the Club lately. So,

by George, I must look sharp, until that little wife of ours gives possession of the real estate. Here goes. I will just write a letter to Craft and agree, provided he will pay us some cash down."

Three days later the agreement was signed. Craft paid some few thousands cash, and a stated sum was agreed upon, to be paid upon the delivery of the title.

## CHAPTER XII.

"Whate'er he did was done with so much ease,  
To him alone 'twas natural to please."

DRYDEN.



THREE years passed rapidly to Edith, with sorrow and joy combined. Had she been told, a few months before her marriage, that she would be called on to part with all those who were so dear to her at that time, she would have prayed to have the cross taken from her, or for her Heavenly Father to take her first.

"O ! blindness to the future ! kindly given,  
That each may fill the circle marked by Heaven."

Henry's health failed a few months after Edith's marriage, and he was advised to go to Europe for a year. He sailed in the ill-fated —, and was never heard from. The anxiety, and the hoping against hope, consequent upon

the failure of tidings from the vessel, then the certainty of her brother's loss, so affected her parents' health that they rapidly followed each other to the grave. It was during these trials that Edith's Christian training came to her support, and kept constantly before her the necessity of nerving herself to the performance of her duty to her husband and children.

"Gantly, you have a precocious youth here. Just come and hear young Harry call me a Moses," said Mr. Parish, laughing heartily, while he tossed the little fellow in the air. "Ah! but here comes the all-important member of the community, in mamma's arms. There, my young lord, your nose is out of joint. Go to your papa. I prefer young ladies' society."

"You a Mosey," lisped Henry, running to his papa.

"Mrs. Gantly, how wonderfully baby has improved. But I must know her, as I am to be god-father to-morrow."

"We are going to call her Lena, after mamma," said Edith sadly, but with a smile as she looked at the little angel in her arms.

Parish noticed the expression, and thought of the first time he saw her, a mere child-wife, in his friend's home. Edith had not changed, except that she had acquired a quiet thoughtfulness, which improved her beauty.

"Gantly," said Parish one evening on his return from town, "I have been thinking a winter in town would be beneficial to both your wife and yourself. You are not looking as robust as of old. You used to be on the go so constantly, that this sedentary life does not agree with you. Don't you think it would be better to enjoy a little of the outside world, Mrs. Gantly?"

"Oh! I hardly know, Mr. Parish. I am so entirely happy here that I never think of or care for any change. Then you must know that I am not a mother likely to leave my children to the care of servants, and court society. I love them too well."

"Very true. And that very devotion to your children, without some of the excitement of life, will shortly affect your health. Nora is so fond of you, I should consider her competent to oversee the nurses."

"She is perfectly so, doubtless. But I am so happy with my little ones."

"And I think you would be equally so during a little run to town. Undoubtedly you would contribute much toward others' happiness by letting them know you. Why, just think of none of your husband's friends having ever seen you. Of course your mourning would prevent your indulging in any thing very gay. But your position would certainly surround you with the élite of society. Now let me engineer this movement, Gantly. I know just the thing that would suit you. Remember Timpson? Well, he has been speculating beyond his depth lately, and I lent him a few thousands to help him out of his scrape. He has a very fine house, elegantly furnished, and almost new. Last week he told me that if he could rent it for the winter, he would do so, and go with his family to Europe. Now, as he is under obligations to me, I can get the house on my own terms. Then, again, remember your wife will be of age in a few months, and there will be many papers to sign, and such matters, requiring her presence in town. I

think you had better fall in with my plan. By the way, there is your father's estate, Mrs. Gantly, to be settled."

"Oh! that will be but little trouble," replied Edith. "Papa's affairs were much involved, and as Alice is about to marry Dr. Cutler's nephew, a missionary to Japan, I intend to give her all my share, with the exception of some stocks I heard papa once say he wished kept for his grandchildren. You can attend to those few matters for me, can you not, Mr. Parish?"

"Certainly, with pleasure; but I will not give up my point; particularly as you say your sister is going to leave you. That in itself is another point in favor of my argument."

"But think of the trouble of keeping two houses, Mr. Parish?"

"My dear Mrs. Gantly, you shall have no bother. The house is perfect. I know Timpson was a wealthy and luxurious man. You need only move a part of your servants, say the nurses and Matthew. I will provide the other servants, and have all in readiness for you. Old John has taken the horses to the city so often in your husband's bachelor days,



that you need not give that department a thought."


"Well, I presume I must yield. I much prefer remaining at home; but your kindness and willingness, as usual, to take all the trouble upon yourself, leaves no excuse for a refusal."

"You are right, Edith; and Parish has opened my eyes to the fact that I have been keeping you too long shut up here, my pet. Be kind enough to take the house immediately, Parish. 'Pon my word, old fellow, we would never be able to live without you."



## CHAPTER XIII.

"L'adresse et l'artifice out passe dans mon cœur,  
Qu'on a sons cet habit et d'esprit et de ruse."

"HICH way, Parish?" said a fashionable young man, taking his arm familiarly, as he sauntered up the avenue.

"Good afternoon, Bob. How are you? On my way to the Club for an hour. We are engaged out to dine, and I have nothing to do to kill time."

"You seem to be killing lots of it lately with that stunning wife of Gantly's. I say, you are a lucky dog."

"What do you mean? You appear to have forgotten your old proverb, 'Humanum est errare!'"

"Mean! Why, do you suppose we are all blind at the Club? The idea of a fellow like you, who always ignored the very name of pet-

ticoat government, now to be devoted, body and time, to a woman—I will not say soul, for I have my doubts of your having one.”

“Preposterous, man! You are well aware that I have to manage all of Mr. Gantly’s business, and am like one of the family. I am not a man to have a penchant for a married woman, especially my client’s wife. Gantly is not very well, and I am rather trotting them, to brace him up a little.”

“Splendid idea! I wish I could get a chance to brace his wife up. Call on me, if you want any help. She’s a regular out and outer.”

“You mistake the party, Bob. Mrs. Gantly is not a society woman.”

“Isn’t she? Oh! I don’t take much stock in pious females. There is usually a streak of *diablerie* under their smooth countenances.”

“Bob, my knowledge of your harmlessness is all that saves your head from the weight of my cane.”

“No offense meant, Parish. I shall not interfere with your little game. But has she not a sister to console me with?”

"Yes, but not in the market. She has but two months since married a clergyman and gone to Japan."

"By Jo! That is sad. Well, introduce me to Madame before they leave town, won't you? You can trust to my not peaching about your old flames."

"I'll see about it. Here we are at the Club, where I must have a quiet smoke. Good-by, Bob. Take care of yourself, and please remember. '*Honi soit qui mal y pense.*'"

Parish was soon seated in an easy-chair, with a cigar in his mouth, and, to all appearance, deeply interested in a paper. But he did not read. Thoughts, sometimes expressed ones, of no pleasing character, ran through his brain with distracting vividness.


"I have been unfaithful to my trust. And how am I to remedy the evil? I did not intend to defraud my friend. Surely I am not to blame if stocks fluctuate so. A man cannot tell for one hour what he has. Then again, if I had been lucky, it would have been for his benefit. But those confounded debts of honor! And then, again, I was fool enough to lend De

Hay five thousand, and Currie ten, and I lost both. Well, never mind! By gracious I believe I have the dyspepsia;" and jumping up from his chair, Parish walked up and down the long reading-room. "I have it," cried he, thrusting his hands into his side-pockets. "A bright idea! I never thought of such a thing till that fool Bob put it into my head. He is only a mouthpiece for the gossip of those fellows, and if I have the name I may as well have the gain. Yes, I see a way out of my difficulties. Our lovely Edith seems to depend on me for advice in every thing. Now, those stocks her father left her are valuable, at least to me at present. I will try and get control of them, and then if I can carry Gantly's W. & W. stocks for six months longer, I know they must go up, and in that event every thing will be *couleur de rose*. Gantly, poor fellow, does not look as if he were long for these gay and festive scenes, and in that case—— And why not? I am *distingué*, at least some think so, and confidence often ends in love. Turn things how they may, I have got to play my cards carefully, but I think I am equal to the

emergency. Six o'clock! How the time has flown! We are invited at eight, so I must go immediately, if I want to start my game to-night.

## CHAPTER XIV.

"A slippery and subtle knave ; a finder out of occasions, that has an eye can stamp and counterfeit advantages."

" CAME rather early, Gantly," said Parish, as he entered the luxurious drawing-room, so we could have a few moments business talk. Our life is so gay now, the moments for rational conversation are few."

"You are right. We have been rather lively for quiet people—a dinner or reception every night. I wish I could get a little time for the opera."

"But do you not enjoy this life? I think your wife should, from the attention she receives."

"Oh yes, we enjoy it ; at least Edith does, and that is all I care for. I tire easily of society. But what did you want to speak to me about? That Craft matter is it? Now that

Edith is of age, I suppose they want the deeds."

"No. That is not it. They cannot take the title yet. I do not know as you understand the case correctly. You see the suit was against your father's estate, and some of the property was improved from which they received rents. The court now holds the title for you until such time as it may be decided whether you are entitled to the rents from the date of your father's death or not. It may be some months before all is finally settled. What I wanted to ask you about was some stocks and bonds your wife owns; a portion of her father's estate. I believe the interest is due on them, and if she wishes me to relieve her of the trouble of collecting it, I will take the papers, and place them with yours, in our safe at the office, and she need have no trouble except receiving the money, which most ladies are willing to do."

"Here she comes, Parish. She is of age and can speak for herself."

Edith walked up to her husband, and looking up in his face in her old mischievous way,



asked : "Have you been taking my name in vain?"

"By no means, Mrs. Gantly," said Parish. "But allow me to congratulate you on your charming appearance this evening, not but that it is always faultless."

"You flatter me too much," answered Edith, slightly blushing. "But what were you saying about me as I entered?"

"Simply this, my dear : Mr. Parish was reminding me that you had some interest due on your stocks. Have you collected it?" asked Mr. Gantly smiling.

"I don't wonder you laugh. I did not even know that you could collect interest on stocks."

"Well, my dear, Mr. Parish kindly proposes to take charge of it for you."

"Oh ! thanks. When shall I get them for you? I will go and get them now if you wish. I have never even looked at them."

"Perhaps it would be as well," said Mr. Parish ; "and then I need not trouble you in the morning, as I go down town early."

Edith returned with the envelope (her inheritance). How little she realized what she


was so carelessly doing! "Here they are, Mr. Parish; the seal is not even broken."

"Ah! I see," said Parish, turning them over one by one. "It will only be necessary for you to sign your name. I believe there is ink in the library. I will bring it to you."

During the drive to their friends' dinner-party Parish seemed like one who had taken opium. He hardly knew what he had done, or how his plan had come so ready-made to his hand. He would triumph yet. He now had the means in his pocket of placing all his foolish speculations on a firm basis.

## CHAPTER XV.

“Miss not the occasion ; by the forelock take  
That subtile Power, the never-halting Time,  
Lest a mere moment’s putting-off should make  
Mischance almost as heavy as a crime.”

“OW little time I get for any thing but the world,” mused Edith, as she sat by a bright fire in her dressing-room. “What a vain show it all is. Still I like it. If I allowed myself to follow my inclination I fear I might give up altogether to its poisonous atmosphere, for I find my vanity is pleased with attention and admiration. I must be weary of this false life to-day, however, or else I am not very well. There is a fearful depression about my chest.”

“A lady wishes to see you, ma’am.”

“Who is it, Matthew?”

“She told me to tell you, ma’am, that it was Miss Rachel Van Ant-wort, as near as I can

get it, ma'am. I asked for a card, please, and she was quite put about, and said that she didn't require tickets to get in where she visited. But if I was afraid she would steal tidies or h'ornaments, she would just sit in the hall. I begged her pardon, and told her my memory was not very good for names, and she said to 'tell you it was your mother's cousin.' "

"Very well, Matthew, I'll be down presently."

"How strange," mused Edith, "Cousin Rachel Van Ant-wort! I heard mamma talk about her. Perhaps Norah can tell me about her. I am glad she has come; but wonder how she knew that I was here. I should have called on the old lady, I presume, but I had really forgotten her existence. I am particularly embarrassed. It is so hard to know what to say to old ladies."

By this time Edith had reached the drawing-room door, and was much inclined to laugh at her visitor, whose back was toward her. She was tall and thin, with a heavy shawl pinned tight around her shoulders, and a bonnet remote from the present fashion. She stood gazing intently at one of the paintings. Edith

came forward with her characteristic ease, and as she extended her hand to welcome her presumed cousin, the old lady took both hands, raising her glasses to her forehead, and studied Edith for a few moments.

"Well, you are like your mother, but rather more like a doll. All that untidy hair about your forehead makes a difference. I suppose you never heard of me, did you?"

"I have heard mamma speak of cousin Rachel, and presume you must be the one. I am very glad to see you. Let us go into the library, it is more sociable there."

"Well, suppose we do. These chairs don't look as if they were meant for use."

"I can assure you they are," answered Edith sweetly. "But it is so lovely in you to come and see me, that I want to make you as comfortable as possible. And besides, you must see my babies. It is too cold to bring them in here."

"How many children have you? Let me see now, what's your name? I remember it was something fancy."

"Edith Le Roy Gantly now."

“Oh, yes. And Alice was the other girl, and Henry the boy. Well, your mother got a queer notion for fancy names. She was christened Belinda; but nothing would do but she must be called Lena. Her father’s name was Josiah, and a good name it was, meaning ‘given by the Lord.’ But that was not fashionable, so her son must be called Henry. Well, they are all gone now, and I’ll be following them soon.”

“I should hope not, cousin. You are looking well. Have you not a brother?” Edith ventured to ask. She had an indistinct recollection of hearing her mother telling some story about a bachelor cousin and his sister.

“Yes; Stephen. He is mostly the cause of my coming here. You see I do not like to meddle with other peoples’ affairs. But Stephen is so particular to do his duty in all things, that he over-persuaded me. ‘For,’ said he, ‘we are the nearest relations the girl has now, and if my suspicions are correct, we can warn her; and if I am mistaken, why there is no harm done.’”

“I cannot understand you, Cousin Rachel,” said Edith, nervously.

“But you will, though, when I have finished.

Now, didn't your father leave you some of your mother's bank stock, and some five hundred shares of the D—— Mining Company stock, with some others that I have forgotten the name of? ”

“ Yes.”

“ Well, have you got them? ”

“ Oh, yes. They have been with my husband's papers at the office for some three months.”

“ At what office? I thought your husband never did any business.”

“ That is correct. But Mr. Gantly has a lawyer that attends exclusively to his affairs. So the office is like his own.”

“ Humph! But how do you know your stocks are in the office? ”

“ Because Mr. Parish told me he would attend to them for me. I believe there was interest to collect.”

“ Did you give him the power to sell or dispose of them? ”

“ Certainly not. He thought it would save me the trouble, so offered to see that they were properly attended to.”

"You misguided girl! To save yourself a little thought or trouble, you place your *all* in the hands of another. Do you not know that we must look after our own goods? Others will not carry our burdens, except for their own gain. I will not ask if your husband advised it, for I am told that he is more a dupe than you are, and sees no wrong in this man. Now I would have you know that your stocks are not in that office. They have been sold some weeks ago. My brother now owns them. He heard that they were to be sold, and got a friend to buy them from your man of law. Finding every thing was entirely in this lawyer's hands he was suspicious, and has since been making inquiries. He hears that this Mr. Parish has entire control of your husband's property, and is much involved by losses on the street, together with gambling debts. Now, it remains for you to take this business into your own hands. I have done my duty."

"But," gasped Edith, "it must be a mistake. Why, Mr. Parish is like my husband's brother, and is beyond suspicion."

"I am very sorry you think so. And, in-



deed, very often we cannot trust our own blood. Still, I did not want to alarm you," said the old lady, her heart melting at the signs of Edith's distress. "It may not be as bad as they think. Keep your eyes open, and just ask about that stock. I must now be getting home."

## CHAPTER XVI.

"The shadows lay along Broadway,  
'Twas near the twilight tide,—  
And slowly there a lady fair  
Was walking in her pride.  
Alone walked she ; but viewlessly  
Walked spirits at her side."

N. P. WILLIS.

"Knavery's plain face is never seen till used."

OTHELLO.



EDITH was too much shocked not to feel relieved at her guest's departure. She sat with her head bowed on her hands, trying to collect her scattered thoughts. Her husband had gone with a friend to a sale of paintings. But even if he had been at home, she would hardly have dared to tell him what she had heard, as he had lately been ill ; and the physician had cautioned her against any sudden excitement.

"Oh ! this must be all a mistake," argued

Edith. "Why, Mr. Parish is a member of the church, and he surely would not be so faithless as to injure the man who has done every thing for him. I am thoroughly disturbed, and the only way to relieve my mind is to go right to him myself, and have all cleared up. I have never been down town alone, and 'tis getting late ; but I think I am equal to almost any emergency now, and this suspense is the worst kind of agony. I will tell Norah to say I am shopping, if I should be detained."

Shortly afterward Edith stepped from the house, closely veiled, and entered a horse-car. When she reached the end of the route, and the conductor called out, "Astor House," she let him assist her out, and after looking around helplessly for a few moments, again turned to him and asked : "Will you please tell me how to get to Wall Street? Is it up or down?" Before he could answer, a gentleman, who was just entering the car, stepped toward her, and said : "Will you not allow me to assist you, madam? I cannot be mistaken. This is Mrs. Gantly, is it not?"

Edith raised her eyes and recognized Mr.

Scott. She had hardly seen him since her marriage.

"Which way are you going, Mrs. Gantly?"

"I want to go to Wall Street; and, would you believe it, I do not know how to get there. I have never been down here except in a carriage."

"I can fully understand your dilemma; so allow me to be oarsman *this* time."

"Oh!" said Edith, "how long ago that seems. I had almost forgotten it," and they talked gayly until they reached the office Edith was in search of.

Mr. Scott left her after having seen her safely within the door:

"Why, Mrs. Gantly," said Parish. "I am greatly surprised to see you here. Is there any thing the matter. I hope your husband is not ill."

"Oh, no," said Edith smiling. "I do not wonder at your surprise. Doubtless you would have been more so had you seen me when I left the car. Had not a friend recognized me I never could have found my way here. I wanted to see you for a few mo-

ments, Mr. Parish, so was rash enough to come down alone."

"Indeed you were rash, Mrs. Gantly. Had you telegraphed, I should have gone up immediately."

"I did not think of that, I came on the impulse of the moment; and now that I am here I don't know how to explain myself," hesitated Edith.

"Do you want any thing? Can I assist you in any way?" asked Parish, showing the deepest interest.

"Well, yes. I want the stocks I gave you. They were mamma's, and I want to keep them for the children."

"Certainly. But you could have asked me that to-night. I am sorry you have fatigued yourself so."

"I am not fatigued, but I have been considerably worried. My cousin told me that you had sold the stocks, some of them being shares in her brother's bank, and I did not believe it, so came to ask you myself."

Parish's blood seemed to turn green. His skin certainly was of that color. In a moment

he replied: "You are a wonderfully plucky woman, and I am glad I have made such a good investment for you. I did sell the stock, and have converted the proceeds into G. and C. R. R. stock, which will pay twice as much."

"But I do not want that," said Edith, getting her courage up. "I must have what I gave you."

"Well, if you insist," said Parish, with the utmost indifference, "I will buy it back."

"How soon can I have it?" asked Edith; "by Friday?"

"I will endeavor to indulge your whim. But have you consulted your husband concerning these matters?"

"No," replied Edith, looking him steadily in the face. "I did not wish to worry him until my suspicions were confirmed."

"Suspicions, Mrs. Gantly? I do not understand you," said Parish changing color.

"I do not consider it necessary to explain to you, sir."

Parish was staggered, and for a moment seemed to be dazed, and to lose his usual self-possession.

“ But, madam, be careful what you do. Remember where you are. You did not stop to think of Mrs. Grundy when you came to my office alone. Of course there was no harm in it. But you know what a flame a few words from me will kindle, and how readily the world will talk about a beautiful woman who has a husband old enough to be her father——”

“ Silence, sir! No words can express the utter contempt I have for you, Mr. Parish,” said Edith, with flashing eyes. “ You have a clerk. Call him to accompany me to the cars ; and remember, sir, I shall expect my bonds on Friday.”

“ What a fool I am,” said Parish after Edith had departed, “ to have so lost control of myself. I might have known what the effect would be with a woman like Mrs. Gantly. This is a confounded mess. I never dreamt of such a complication. And how am I to weather it? I would almost rather die than live to see Gantly in such a position as will inevitably result if the market does not change. Great God! what have I done? And those damnable cards the cause of it all. Yet this won't do.

I *must* keep up my pluck, and perhaps the Fates may change in my favor. I will just go there as if nothing had happened. I doubt if she dare tell him. Something may turn up yet." And so this conscience-stricken, sinning man tried to deceive himself as to the actual condition of affairs, while every hour was adding to the ruin he had heaped up for his trusting friend by his mammon worship. "The love of money is the root of all evil. Those coveting after it err from the faith and pierce themselves through with many sorrows."

A few hours later Parish walked into Mr. Gantly's library. Edith was seated by the fire with little Lena on her lap. Mr. Gantly rose from the seat where he had been guiding Henry's pencil during an attempt to draw mamma's picture, and welcomed Parish as cordially as ever. Edith bowed and clasped her little girl tightly in her arms, as if the Erl King had entered. She was suffering from a headache caused by the excitement of the afternoon.

"I have had a delightful day, Parish. An old friend, Bob Clark, came for me to go to the private exhibition of Pierson's gallery. You



know it is to be sold. A sad business, is it not? Do you know the cause of it?"

"Not exactly. I believe a depreciation in stocks," said Parish, slightly embarrassed. "Clark says he has lost every thing."

"Can it be possible for a man with so much property to lose all?"

"Certainly it is possible if a man is not posted. And it requires a large cash margin when one has real estate to carry."

"It is sad for his family. I understand his daughters are teaching. Why, Edith, how pale you are!" said Mr. Gantly going to her.

"The room is very warm, and if you will take Lena to Norah, I will retire. Excuse me, Mr. Parish."


Poor Edith! Her heart was too full to sleep. She felt that for her a storm was impending, and that she must nerve herself to meet it bravely. She had felt, at the time of her parents' death, that no suffering could be equal to such separations. She was then consoled and comforted by her husband's love and sympathy. But now this mental agony seemed more than human nature could bear, for she saw all the

distress that was coming to her husband. She reasoned with herself, and realized how little thought she had given to the worldly blessings bestowed upon her. When she had prayed for strength to meet the emergency boldly, she rose from her knees strengthened in mind and firmly satisfied that it was her duty to represent the matter to her husband without further delay, and, by meeting it cheerfully, be his helpmate in adversity as well as in prosperity.

## CHAPTER XVII.

"Things without all remedy  
Should be without regard. What's done is done."

MACBETH.

"OW came you to give this paper to Mr. Craft? Did you fully understand the conditions required?"

"I am fully aware you will shake your head at such an unbusiness-like transaction, Mr. Bliss; but I confess I did not understand them. I always relied on Parish's judgment. He advised my signing. I did so, and of course will hold to my agreement."

"Then it must be attended to immediately, as I find a clause in it requiring your wife's signature before the expiration of six months after she attains her majority, or you forfeit the paltry purchase-money. I must say that it is the most outrageous document I ever read. Do you not think that Parish had an interest in the agreement?"

“It is impossible for me to judge. I have faith in all human nature. I can see that the world will censure me, but no one can appreciate the friendship there was between us. We were more than brothers ; I trusted every thing to him.”

“But did you sign these papers and deeds without reading them ? ”

“Certainly. I should much sooner have subjected some paper of my own composition to a thorough scrutiny to see if I had cheated myself, than to have suspected him. He was my constant companion, a churchman, and is godfather to my child.”

“Oh ! that cloak of Christianity ; how many widows’ portions it has devoured. I have known men like Mr. Parish go to church daily, and pass the alms-plate, and yet take that same money and speculate with it ; some few, doubtless, have been able to cover their fraud, but there are others, who, by using their trustworthy positions in the church as a bait, have brought the most abject poverty on whole families, while they themselves revel in luxury in foreign lands.”

"It will be hard to make me believe this step premeditated," replied Mr. Gantly. "He must have been roped in by these gambling stock-exchange brokers."

"You must not be too severe, Mr. Gantly. The stock business, if done legitimately, is as honorable as any other."

"Do you call it an honorable business where men combine to break down the credit of worthy corporations, conspire to give a fictitious value to that which is valueless, and make it their aim to cheat each other and swindle the world? Is that legitimate? I can see no difference between a professional gambler in stocks and any other gambler."

"Taking the middle view of things, Mr. Parish showed great want of judgment in changing such securities as yours were, and mortgaging your real estate. He was not in the 'ring,' and had to employ a broker to keep himself posted. The fluctuations have been so great lately that in an hour a man might be utterly ruined."

"That goes to confirm what I said. Its very basis is gambling. See the temptation it holds out to those greedy for wealth. The whole na-

tion will yet be thrown into a state of panic by these 'bulls and bears.' The greatest blessing that could befall our country would be the shutting up of this legal gambling shop. It would indeed be better, if these men insist on following such a pursuit, to let them do so in private, where they use a thicker kind of paper and have but four knaves in the pack."

"Your argument is a strong one, but I fear that it is too late for you to profit by it. This striving to get rich suddenly is making our whole country unstable. Instead of being satisfied with an honest return for our labor, we try to shirk our work, and want a hundred times more than it is worth."

"Ah! that shirking work is the root of the evil. I shirked my work and placed the temptation in Parish's hands. It is an old saying that inherited wealth, instead of prompting to further acquisition, is 'a title-deed to sloth.'"


"Very true, my friend; and how many men begin their fortunes where their fathers leave off, and leave off where their fathers began."

"That, I imagine, Mr. Bliss, is my position. So I must put my shoulder to the wheel, and

gather up the fragments. I would like you to make a thorough investigation, so that I may see how I stand. As Parish has the deeds for all the property it will be necessary to bring a suit for recovery."

## CHAPTER XVIII.

"Deceit is the strong but subtle chain which runs through all the members of a society, and links them together ; trick, or be tricked, is the alternative ; 'tis the way of the world, and without it intercourse would drop."—ANONYMOUS, 1722.

UNE was rapidly passing away, the season had been unusually warm, and people were getting languid and deserting the metropolis. Mr. Gantly had returned to the manor early in May, and immediately after had brought a suit against Parish to recover his property. Parish had thrown himself with the most perfect recklessness into the maelstrom of dissipation and fashionable life.

We find him dining at the Club one hot afternoon—not an unusual occurrence—but the hour was early for him. He was moodily reading a paper, while the solitary servant moved silently about the large deserted dining-room. He several times raised his eyes and looked



anxiously toward the door, as if anticipating the arrival of a companion, then moved his chair impatiently and stroked his long silky mustache. Then with an arrogant and impatient manner he called to the servant to look into the reading-room and see if Mr. Gordon had not arrived.

"He is just entering the room, sir," was the unexpected reply.

Parish looking up quickly, met the sharp glance of his expected friend. The entering stranger was a tall, handsome man, with bold features, rather prominent nose, keen black eyes, while his fine receding forehead spoke of the intellect his silver locks covered. His manner was most gentlemanly and prepossessing.

"I am amazingly punctual, am I not? Please don't look so glum about it, or I shall think this oppressive heat has soured you. I must say I never felt any thing to equal it in August. This is the kind of weather I imagine Sydney Smith experienced when he wished he could take off his skin and sit in his bones."

"I wish you had considered my very proper annoyance,—such an infernally hot day, sitting

here fanning for an hour. I asked you to dine at five, and now it is after six."

"Really, I am very sorry," said Mr. Gordon apologetically; "but it was unavoidable. I started in time, but the Fates were against me, in the shape of a fair woman. As I came up the avenue I met that charming widow, Mrs. Johnson, and she prevailed on me to take a short drive. Does it need any further explanation? The time passed without reckoning."

"Oh! I can readily excuse you," said Parish, looking knowingly at his friend, "if any woman was in the case, aware as I am of your *penchant* for the fair sex. Then again, Mrs. Johnson is one in a thousand for making a fellow forget every thing but her fascinating self. Have some claret, it will cool you off."

"Thank you, yes. But I do not call the widow particularly handsome; still she is pretty, and has the most charming, confiding manner. I was intimate with her before we had driven ten squares. It was so refreshing this hot day; to meet a woman who will take all the trouble of entertaining into her own hands. She told me all her petty annoyances, how lonely she

was, and eulogized the merits of her dear departed. Do you think she could find a substitute? By the bye, she seems to know you pretty well."

"Probably. But did she volunteer any information?"

"Not any. She seemed seeking for facts; perhaps to fill in a census report. Her inquiries were sufficiently minute. At last I expected she was on the point of asking how many cigars you smoked, when she astounded me by asking if you were engaged."

"And you answered with your characteristic tact——"

"That I knew nothing about your *affaires de cœur*, but doubted if one so lovely as herself could have a rival in any man's heart."

"The devil you did! That is heaping coals on the fire. Had you kept your appointment you could have given her the information she was seeking. I am engaged to Miss Eckford."

"*Parbleu!* Parish, are you joking?" asked Mr. Gordon, looking keenly at his friend.

"Not at all. It is an uncomfortable fact," answered Parish, sipping his claret with a

slight sneer on his lip, "and partly the cause of my requesting this interview; and quite as unexpected to me as to yourself. You know she is wealthy. The property is in her own name. Her mother is delicate, and her uncle cannot prevent her following her inclinations. So, seeing a chance of getting out of my present embarrassment, I made up my mind to throw romance to the wind and make a successful business transaction."

"I suppose I must congratulate you. But how many hearts you will jeopardize! What is she like?"

"Not particularly pretty. She seems clever without being intellectual; amiable, not in an angelic sense; high-strung, without showing the vixen. She suits me about as well as any woman I ever met. Don't smile so incredulously."

"You do put it in an odd light. Has the pretty widow any thing to do with your depression?"

"I can tell you, Gordon, this is no jesting matter; and unless I look sharp, I shall lose my game. 'Tis the devil's own luck that put

it into my power to get this girl, and that Bob Clark, with his saintly spite, may upset it all."

"I cannot see what he has to do with it," said Gordon seriously.

"Just this much:—he is in love with my *fiancée*, and he knows of a little flirtation Mrs. Johnson and I had while in Europe. He is also cognizant of some of these infernal affairs of Gantly's, and is trying his best to turn the tide against me. Unless I can get the panacea to all society prejudices—money—into my hands before this case comes on, I shall be beaten."

"I declare you look at it in an unpleasant light. I supposed you felt confident of success against Gantly. You have not given me the papers; but I judged from your representation of the facts it was almost a certainty. What are to be your present movements?"

"Movements? I am not allowed a voice in the matter. Horrors! I had rather be in prison than pinioned as I am. I have not been engaged a week yet, and already the mother of my prize thinks it best to go galavanting off to Saratoga with her interesting daughter, inasmuch as it is her last season in

society. I sincerely trust it may be her first and last in mine also."

"Don't take it so to heart, Parish. True love never runs smooth. The widow will come out ahead yet."

"Stuff! What do I care for love, except to pass the time?" said Parish, filling his glass again, and drinking the wine off. "The idea of my going to Saratoga, of all places on the face of the earth. Every one will be there, and I am fearfully short. And then, if some of my kind friends wished to break up my little arrangement, see how easily they could do it. I propose to lie around in the country all summer, and be married in the fall. You could easily delay this law matter from month to month until I had my game under cover."

"Really, Parish, this is an ugly business," said Gordon emphatically, "and I would advise you not to place yourself in such a false position. The whole thing will sooner or later come out, and it will lay you open to more serious charges of dishonor."

"It is not going to come out," replied Parish. "I am going to let it have its course."

But it's frightfully hot here. Take another glass of wine, and we will go out and have a walk. The night air may be a little cooler. Have you any other engagement?"

"No; and it certainly is stifling here. We can arrange a few matters as we stroll up the avenue. When do you go?"

"To-morrow; and I'd rather be hung."

"I doubt that. We will be surprised some fine morning to hear that you have run off with the widow. She took too much interest in your affairs to let you out of her clutches easily. I give you a week before she joins you."

"By Jove! If she does, it will be a sorry day for her. But come along. I suppose when the time comes I must face the music."

## CHAPTER XIX.

"Wealth is the Conjuror's Devil,  
Whom, when he thinks he hath, the Devil hath *him*."



ARATOGA was overflowing with its summer fullness. The streets were rendered almost impassable by the retinue of broadcloth, false hair, and muslin that thronged them. The season had reached its culminating point. Everybody complained of the heat, crush, and discomfort. Yet still reinforcements came pouring in. Legion seemed their name. Every nook and corner in the mammoth hotel seemed filled. The piazzas were thronged with dignified matrons and calm old gentlemen fanning themselves, and occasionally strolling off for a glass of spring water, unconsciously laboring to convince themselves that they were having a charming recreation out of reach of the stifling heat of the metropolis. Thus poor deluded worshipers at the



shrine of fashion, will reason against their own common sense, that three weeks spent at Saratoga is more beneficial than a summer in some cool retreat without the allurements of a promiscuous society. At one end of the long piazza of the United States Miss Eckford was earnestly consulting with her mother.

"I am so tired of this watering-place life. A little quiet would be a relief. Can we not go back to our dear old house, and spend the remainder of the summer under our own roof, dear mother?"

"Certainly, my dear, if it will add to your happiness. Why this ennui? You have always been so fond of society, and I am sure you seemed to enjoy every moment of the ball last evening."

"Very true, mamma; but since my engagement I find it rather tiresome to enter into the gossip and flirtation of gay life. Then, again, Mr. Parish really seems tired and not well. I barely suggested a return last evening, and he seemed instantly to grasp at the idea. Now if it be annoying to him to remain here, had we not better return? I have been strangely depressed

lately, do you know? At times I think I have some one else's share of happiness besides my own; and it has filled my mind with the idea that some trouble must be in store for me. I have had such a bright life; not even a shade of anxiety."

"You are very wrong to allow such thoughts, my child, and the sooner you dismiss these fancies the better. I fear that you are not well, and perhaps it would be best to return to our home. Your time will be fully occupied with your trousseau the remainder of the season."

Miss Eckford here cut short the conversation by eagerly catching a lady by the arm as she was passing.

"How glad I am to see you, Mrs. Johnson. When did you come?"

"Why, Laura, this is a charming surprise," exclaimed Mrs. Johnson. Then turning to a young man in the crowd, "Mr. Clark, are we not lucky? Here are all the Eckfords."

"How refreshing it is to meet some one that looks as deliciously cool as you do, Miss Eckford, during this intolerable weather," said Mr. Clark, with marked admiration. "Had I been

given the use of a wishing cap, I could not have desired any thing more pleasing than this meeting. What an exquisite bunch of roses you are favored with!"

"Are they not lovely? I am so extravagantly fond of flowers! Mr. Parish humors my taste by sending me just such a bunch every morning before we breakfast. This is the Glorie Dijon, I need hardly tell you. Every one is so fond of that matchless rose."

"I confess that I know nothing about the names of flowers. 'The rose by any other name would smell as sweet,'" said Mr. Clark, with decided harshness. "Mr. Parish is doubtless familiar with all——"

Here his remark was cut short by Mrs. Johnson. She had been retailing the last piece of gossip to Mrs. Eckford, and now, turning to Laura, asked why her fiancé was not on duty.

"I think I see him coming. Let me attract his attention. How are you this morning, John. I have such a pleasant surprise for you. Mrs. Johnson and Mr. Clark have just joined us."

"Any thing but pleasant, my dear Laura. A

decided infliction in my opinion," said Parish, frowning and flushing impatiently. "If there be one thing distasteful to me it is a fast woman."

"Do you really think Mrs. Johnson is?"

"Is beautiful? Ah! distractingly so, Miss Eckford," said Clark, joining them. "Mr. Parish thought so a few months since. But how are you, Parish? I declare you look played out. And no wonder, if this is the time of day you breakfast. It is going on to twelve o'clock."

"One is not obliged to feed the moment one gets up," answered Parish, visibly annoyed.

"Ah! Then I suppose you rise with the lark, take a constitutional, drink spring water, and, may I suggest, brandy and soda occasionally, all before breakfast."

"Am I not to have any recognition, Mr. Parish?" asked Mrs. Johnson, with a smile, extending her delicately gloved hand, and opening her large blue eyes to their fullest extent.

"I beg ten thousand pardons, Mrs. Johnson, but the fault is due to the throng here. I have been making my way as fast as possible toward the center of attraction, but it is difficult to approach."

"You seem not to have lost the power of flattery, I see, Mr. Parish. I hardly think you deserve forgiveness. When a man neglects his old friends, as you have done, he deserves to be punished. I cannot even allow that an engagement is an excuse for every such act."

"You do not look upon it with the eyes the world does. Unless you are greatly changed, however, I think I can depend upon generous treatment from one who has always been my beau ideal of perfection," said Parish, exchanging a look of tenderness, which seemed to be echoed back from her as she answered :

"Time may heal the wound, but at present you are hopelessly out of my good graces. I cannot endure neglect, and I purposely avoid arguing with engaged men. They are of all men the most stupid."

"Mrs. Johnson, I must protest against tête-à-têtes. Our party is too small," said Miss Eckford ; "and I am impatient to tell you all that my mother has consented to go to our lovely home for the remainder of the summer."

"Oh ! how charming !" cried Mrs. Johnson. "It is a perfect relief to my mind. I am invited

to visit some old cousins near there, and I was dreading the thoughts of being obliged to spend two weeks in such a deserted place. They tell me there is not even a divinity student to flirt with. Only imagine poor me shut up with those old maids. It would give me so much time to think over my sins of omission and commission that I should more than likely go in search of my first love and try to heal his broken heart."

"I fear it would carry you back so many years, Mrs. Johnson, your memory would fail you, and so the right man might not get his reward," said Mr. Clark, laughing.

"Your gallantry is only excusable by your years, Mr. Clark. Have you not a place in that neighborhood, Mr. Parish?" asked Mrs. Johnson.

"I believe I am not so fortunate, Mrs. Johnson."

"That is a good joke, Parish. You mean you do not play for such small game. How soon will you take possession of Gantly Manor? You have fleeced the owner out of every thing else."

Parish turned quickly, and with flashing eyes confronted Mr. Clark. "How *dare* you make such an accusation, and in the presence of

ladies? It but more fully reveals your cowardly propensities."

"I only spoke the truth," returned Clark, "which your conscience, if you have any, must echo back; and consider it no disrespect to the ladies to expose a man who will by deliberate fraud possess himself of his confidential friend's property. Such an one has forfeited every characteristic of a man of honor, and deserves to be branded for what he is. Think you these crimes will go forever unpunished? Can you suppose there will be no retributive vengeance?"

"You shall give satisfaction for this," almost gasped Parish, gnashing his teeth. "Mrs. Eckford, allow me to escort yourself and daughter to the drawing-room,"

Stepping forward to offer his arm, he fell forward to the ground. Mr. Clark hesitated for a moment with a scornful smile on his lip, waiting for Mr. Parish to arise, presuming he had made a false step. But as he remained motionless, he stepped to his side and immediately exclaimed, "Help! Water! quick! He has fainted."

In an instant the excitement was intense. Mrs. Johnson, in the most tragical manner, grasped the first man near her, declaring herself fainting and frightened to death, while in reality she was congratulating herself on the exquisite attitude she had thrown herself into. Laura, greatly alarmed, leaned over her fiancé, and endeavored to assist in restoring him. In less time than it takes to describe it, a physician was at his side, and after a few moments quietly informed Mr. Clark that the gentleman was dead.



## CHAPTER XX.

"When tasks of life thy spirit fill,  
Risen from thy tears and dust,  
Then be the self-renouncing will  
The seal of thy calm trust."

LYRA APOSTOLICA.



WO years had passed since the tragic events of the preceding chapter had astounded and shocked the fashionable world. The electric message that carried the announcement to Gantly manor was like a messenger of death to its beloved master. Mr. Gantly never recovered from the shock. The duplicity of his friend, combined with the loss of property, had shattered his nervous system. He reproached himself constantly for trusting to another what he should have guarded for his wife and children. His death did not come on Edith suddenly. From the time that Parish's villainy had become apparent, she had seen it was an inevitable fate. She never fastened

any hope on his recovery ; for she could see him, with her unselfish watchfulness, imperceptibly passing into another world. Her entire forgetfulness of self gave her no time to realize her own feelings. Her trials seemed to glorify her. She always wore a smile when in his presence, and comforted him with her Christian guidance. When can we say death is not sudden, even death the most lingering? Those who watch the fleeting breath are ever startled by Azrael's dark countenance, however expected he may be.

Dr. Cutler was Edith's only comfort. She clung to him as her last earthly stay. And had it not been for his cheerful support, she would have prayed to pass from this life of trouble and sorrow. The sad minutiae of the funeral details, the necessary household changes, and innumerable orders to be given at such a time, Edith attended to with minutest accuracy, although she was like the phantom of her former self.

Six months passed wearily on. Edith was occupied with the care of her children and home. She knew but little about the details of

business, but tried to give orders when and where required. The lawyers, who had taken care of the suit against Mr. Parish's estate, communicated with her from time to time, but had been unable to make any satisfactory arrangements with the opposing side.

"Mamma, here's a letter. Dr. Cutler brought it from the post. He is playing with Lena, and sent me in to tell you he would be in presently," said Henry, kissing his mamma and running out to join in the frolic with his old friend.

Edith opened her letter languidly. She did not receive many, and those not joyous ones. As she followed the lines down, her countenance visibly changed to a deadly white. Covering her face with her hands, she buried her head in the sofa pillow and sobbed like a child. Dr. Cutler found her, a few moments after, in this condition.

"Why, I am surprised to see you so distressed, my dear Mrs. Gantly. Have I been the unconscious bearer of sad news?"

Edith handed him the crushed letter, which he read.

"MRS. GANTLY :—*Dear Madam,*—For some months we have been endeavoring to get your suit against Mr. Parish's heirs in proper shape to be able to judge what would be the result. We have at last found he has deeds for all the property, and that he has mortgaged the same to the fullest extent. We also find the manor is mortgaged for fully its value, and the interest is unpaid since Parish's death. It will be necessary to sell the place to meet the incumbrance. We advise closing the Parish suit, as nothing could be reclaimed, and it is only involving you more and more every day. The party holding the mortgage has threatened to foreclose it. Write us your wishes.

"Respectfully yours,

"BLISS & CLARK."

"This is very sad news, and I sincerely sympathize with you. But you must not allow it to distress you so, for it will unfit you to meet the emergency."

"I cannot bear it, Dr. Cutler. Why doesn't God let me die?"

"You are sadly unnerved, my child. Where

is your faith? Are you rebelling against God Almighty? Does he not tell you, 'As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten!' 'Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth!' If you are a disciple of Christ, you must take up your cross daily and suffer the burden, for only through much tribulation can we enter the kingdom of God."

"It is not God I rebel against. I can patiently bear His afflictions," exclaimed Edith, with the most heartrending sob. But this wicked, wicked man! To have killed my husband, and now to beggar my children! Oh! it is more than I can bear."

"You say you do not rebel against God, and yet you cry out that you cannot bear your cross. You would measure the amount of your affliction only by surrendering your mind, body, and estate to the sovereign Disposer of all events. Can you prove your humility to Him, and in the deepest sense of your soul, say, 'Thy will, O God, be done with me, with mine?' God's mercy is incomprehensible. He worketh out His ways, not ours. We are not to pass judgment on our brothers' souls, but

live for the happiness of the living. 'Let the dead past bury its dead.' "

"But what can I do? My chance of usefulness in the world is taken from me. I cannot give help. Even my own children—how can I provide for them?"

"Does not God promise that every fatherless soul shall be under His protection? Does He not give his angels charge concerning us? The world may forsake us; friends, the most tried and trusted, desert us. Human love may seem a mockery and a dream; but the love of the blessed angels never tires, never faints. They guard our life; they brighten our joys; share our sorrows, and at last bear us through the 'open door' into the presence of God, 'from whom all holy desires, all good councils, and all just works do proceed.' But you must guard against the angels of darkness, who are continually striving against your angel of light."

"I have endeavored to do my duty, and remember your advice and consolation, Doctor. But at each step I take toward resignation I am met by a fresh burden more heavy than the last."

“And you look back on those that are past as light in comparison. And so it will continue to the faithful unto the end. We are suffering for Christ’s sake. He is our ‘Christus Consolator,’ and we must rejoice if we are singled out to suffer and labor for Him. We may become sympathizing ministers of consolation at our very doors. You will find opportunities enough of doing good. There are children to be brought to baptism ; the sick to be visited ; ignorance to be enlightened. Seek opportunities for kind words, charitable deeds, pious councils, soothing sympathies, and fervent prayers. All these may be accomplished without wealth, and in all there is a chance for work and self-denial. By being brought face to face with the more heartrending trials of our fellow-workers, we are strengthened for our own. ‘Thus hath the mystery of suffering a partial solution even here. You suffer not always for your own sins, not always as a chastisement and correction. But you suffer with Christ, that like him you may be able to succor those who are in any trouble, sorrow, need, sickness, or any other adversity.’

“ ‘For sorrow, like that darkest hour,  
That just precedes the day,  
Is only sent to fit our hearts  
For joy’s unclouded ray!’ ”

“Thank you, Dr. Cutler. You have really made me happy again,” said Edith, a sad smile shining through her tears. “I did wish at first to die, and so be freed from my load. I felt wicked and rebellious, but my good angel has triumphed. The victory is won, and I feel a new life flowing through my veins. But how can I keep down my rebellious spirit?”

“By fulfilling the duties God has placed in your hands ; by clinging to your faith. It has been beautifully observed : ‘When the heart, which has been away on a journey, suddenly, at midnight (*i. e.*, the time of greatest darkness and distress) returns home to us (that is, comes to itself and feels hunger), and we have nothing wherewith to satisfy it, God requires of us bold, importunate faith.’ We must pray unceasingly for that faith, ‘Our Father which art in Heaven ;’ that exquisite brevity. It is indeed what the Fathers have called it, a ‘*Brevarium Evangelii*,’ the pearl of prayers. You remember, in the




Pilgrim's Progress, when Christian was in the Valley of the Shadow of Death, and was so sorely tried with the mire on one side, the ditch on the other, and the flames and the smoke ; while the hideous voice made him imagine that a company were coming to meet him, he put up his sword and betook himself another weapon called All-prayer. Then he heard, as it were, a man going before him, saying, ' Though I walk through the Valley of the Shadow of Death I will fear no evil, for thou art with me.' But I hear the first bell for evening service. Let us call the children, and we will have time to walk down. While you put on your bonnet I will tell Matthew to come for you."

## CHAPTER XXI.

"Then, breaking into tears,—'Dear God,' she cried, 'and must we see

All blissful things depart from *us*, or ere we go to Thee?'"

E. B. BROWNING.

"ES; bear it I must and will," exclaimed Edith, as she lifted her head from her arm, where she had been resting it. "But oh! how hard it is to forgive our enemies and persecutors, when they have taken all from us, left our homes desolated, and snatched our children's inheritance from them. Can I bear the full force of this sorrow, welcome every thing that is in store for me, and, like Sintram, conquer my doom? But now, can I leave my home, never to return?—the place I loved so dearly; my husband's pride; the beautiful home he brought me to. Oh God! my troubles are more than I can bear;" and, wringing her hands, Edith threw herself

down upon a chair. For a few moments despair seemed to overwhelm her ; but recovering herself she remembered her resolution and her children's dependency ; and her guardian angel pleaded for them. " My noble boy ! I must be brave for him. Change of scene will be best of all."

Ambition for her children fortunately forced her to face the future. That very night she laid her plans according to the emergency of the case, with a caution and foresight worthy of a mature head. Not only had she now to bear but to act ; and before the late hour at which she fell asleep, the first step in her line of action was determined. She must find a new home. New scenes and new faces would enable her to forget the past. She promised Dr. Cutler to be hopeful and trusting in God's love and support, and to try and say from her heart, " Thy will be done."

That evening she was more cheerful than usual, reading and amusing the children. She was not the " Sunshine," of Airsley, whom we first knew. She was bright and joyous with her little ones, but there was a serene melan-

choly and thoughtful dreamy look, as if her thoughts were afar off at times. It was after Nora had taken the children, and she stood alone before the fire in the large luxurious library, where she had passed so many happy hours, that the full force of her solitude and bereavement came upon her. How different the room looked, which had once been her ideal of cheerfulness! The organ and book-cases, with the heavy carved furniture, and dark red drapery of the deep windows seemed to absorb the light of the lamp, and send out ghosts and phantoms of her former life.

"Gales from Heaven, if so He will,  
Sweeter melodies may wake  
On the lonely mountain rill,  
Than the meeting waters make.  
Who hath the Father and the Son,  
May be left, but not alone."

So murmured Edith as she fell asleep.

. . . . .  
Morning failed to bring comfort. Edith awoke with the feeling of something having happened, or being about to happen. It is impossible to define closely the sensation of a new

life opening before us, and the old one being left to oblivion. It is akin to that kind of feeling one has on the morning of a marriage or funeral. She rose with a weary calmness and a shrinking from the inevitable. Her task was a hard one ; and when little Lena nestled up for her morning kiss, she could scarcely check the tears. But childish prattle soon dispelled the cloud, and a few hours later, when Dr. Cutler called, she, with the most perfect calmness, placed her plans before him.

"But, my dear child," said the old Doctor perceptibly agitated, "this is a superhuman task you have taken upon yourself. You do not fully understand the difficulties."

"Indeed I do, sir. I have calculated every thing, pros and cons, and I am fully determined to seek a home among strangers."

"But why among strangers? Here we all love you so dearly."

"And for that very reason I must go. Strangers will know nothing of my former life, and will not pity me. I know it is kind, and sweet, and all that, but your kindness would be the worst thing for me now. My only

chance is to be courageous, and look the situation bravely in the face. My education and musical talent I can now turn to some use."

"You can use both here. You know, Edith, that since your parents died I have had a father's interest in you, and can help you with your labors."

"Please do not make it more painful than it is. There is no other way, Doctor, and if you want to help me, you will remove all obstacles to my going. A favorite author of mine says: 'Women are strange creatures. Men think they know us, but they never do. We are different from them, both in our good points and in our bad.' So you must just let me have my own way. That is my bad point."

"I cannot see the advantage of this plan. Perhaps it is because I am selfish and do not want to lose my favorite child; for such you have been since the day I placed the sign of your entrance into Christ's fold upon your infant brow."

"I will not be lost to you, Doctor; indeed no. You must let me write you all my troubles and pleasures; and you certainly will come

and visit us ; and perhaps I may sometime come home and see you."

" But where are you going ? You speak as if this had been a plan perfected for months."

" It matters little where we go. I prefer a large town, where Henry can have advantages as he grows older, and where I may have a larger field to work in. I intend to take a little French proverb for my motto : ' Aide-toi et le ciel t'aidera.' You see I haven't any rich old uncles to leave me bags full of money ; and I cannot afford to wait for some benevolent old gentleman to take a fancy to me, and then die and leave me a trunk full of treasures," said Edith smiling.

" You are a brave woman, Mrs. Gantly."

. . . . .

The last day was quickly passing. Edith had been firm in her resolve. She believed that she was doing right, and never wavered. Dr. Cutler had found a pleasant house for her in a parish where he knew the rector, and it was not a great distance from N——, so that she could be in quick communication with him in case of any emergency. The last few hours

were the most trying. Norah and the children regretted so much leaving their favorite treasures, that it took all Edith's energy to encourage them. Just before the hour for starting she stood by the window, looking for the last time upon the glorious view; that particular spot where Mr. Gantly had had an opening cut in the trees, so that she could have the full benefit of the scene without leaving the house. Was it strange that her heart began to fail her, and that she whispered to herself, "*It is hard.*" She looked around the luxurious room, so handsome, yet so homelike; hers, yet passing from her. It appeared like death in the midst of life. She might be entering into a new sphere, but this was the dear old familiar one, and it was leaving her. Years after Edith told her children she never realized how she bore that hour. It seemed to have been like a dream. It all came suddenly. Many have recorded such departures with intense vividness of description, relying upon the powers of imagination for their facts; but many more have actually endured similar trials, and the latter acknowledge when the life histories are repro-



duced how utterly imagination fades before reality. "Remember in these life tragedies we do not see behind the scenes. Perhaps when the play is done we shall."

## CHAPTER XXII.

"The coldness from my heart has gone,  
But still the weight is there ;  
And thoughts which I abhor will come  
To tempt me to despair."

SOUTHEY.



HE last good-by had been said. Dr. Cutler had endeavored in various ways to get up a little mirth, to pass the time and lessen the pain of parting, which seemed almost too much for him. But it proved very feeble, and Edith seeing the pain it caused him, suddenly imagined that the clocks were slow, and called to Norah to hurry. Every thing was in confusion in a moment. Henry had his dog to look to. Lena insisted on taking her favorite kitten, so the poor creature was squeezed into a basket. Norah had her arms full of wraps and lunch-baskets, topped with the bandbox containing her best bonnet ; she never could trust *that* to the express. Dr. Cutler gave

Matthew the same orders, about checking the baggage, over at least a dozen times. Poor weary Edith was the only calm one. At last the carriage door was closed ; a warm pressure of the hand to Edith ; a kiss on each of the children's brows, with " God bless you all," and Dr. Cutler saw them whirled away. They were out of sight of that dear home, and half way down the winding avenue before Edith had the children and wraps all properly stowed ; so she had not a chance to look back. But as they neared the village she caught a glimpse of the cross on the church spire, and watched intently until it was hidden from view as they neared the station. Once or twice a large tear slowly gathered, but she checked it unnoticed. At the station all was again confusion. Baggage to check, tickets to procure, Norah and the children to get safely deposited in a commodious compartment. They were several miles *en route* to their new home before Edith realized that they had fairly started. During the ride children and nurse got very tired. Lena fretted for her dolls that were in the trunks. Henry tried to be very manly, and declared Norah had

a "grumpy fit," and that she and Lena were not fit to travel. Edith, seeing that they were all over-excited and tired out, put her ingenious brain to work, and with Norah's help made a hammock by stretching a heavy traveling shawl from one end of the long compartment to the other. The children were delighted. Both got in with Fido, and after eating all the oranges and cake their thoughtful mother had provided for them, they fell into a quiet sleep. Norah contrived a pillow in one corner of the lounge, and her eyes soon closed likewise. There was then a temporary lull in Edith's cares. She could sit quietly with her eyes fixed on the changing landscape, although she did not see it. Her thoughts wandered toward that unknown place and unknown life into which she was sweeping. She, for the first time, began to doubt. Anxious as she had been for the change, and wise as the proceeding appeared, yet now, that the last link had been broken, and all that was familiar left behind, that peaceful, precious home appeared, if possible, to grow more dear.

"I wonder if I shall ever go back again," thought she. Here her reverie was cut short

by the conductor on his round for tickets ; and the children waking, a thousand and one questions had to be answered, which passed the time until they arrived at their destination. How many of us have felt that strange sensation of intense solitude on arriving in a strange place. We know not which way to turn. The passers-by are all anxiously absorbed with themselves, their own affairs, their baggage. Of all places where human nature shows itself to greatest disadvantage, the railroad station is the worst. Edith had prepared herself to fight as well as endure, and had her plans thoroughly formed. They entered their new home without any unnecessary delay. An old servant of the former occupant had remained and prepared things for their reception ; but the contrast between the luxurious mansion they had left, and the house they now entered, was very marked. They were shown into a nice, large, square room, but the scant furniture, placed in stiff regularity against the wall ; the black stone fireplace reflecting the fading twilight, gave all a ghastly appearance. Edith had a few pleasant words for the rather prim serving-woman, and

desired her to get a cup of tea made as soon as possible, as they were all very tired, and the children must go to bed.

Lena had been listening with open mouth and eyes to her mamma's orders, and as soon as she finished rushed into her arms crying :

"Oh! mamma, mamma! Let us go home. This is not a pretty home. I don't want to stay here."

As the child nestled into her mother's arms one great sob burst from Edith—just one passionate, pent-up sob. Then she kissed her child, and laughing a forced hollow laugh, said, "Is this my little lady that is going to keep house for mamma?"

"Very nice housekeeper you will make, Lena," said Henry very opportunely, "if you starve us as you are doing the cat."

This roused Lena, and she forgot her grief in attending to the wants of her cat. As soon as it could be conveniently accomplished, all were glad to seek their rest. Long after sleep had visited the weary eyelids of her children, yes, even until dawn had melted into perfect daylight, did Edith lie open-eyed, listening to

every sound. The strange rumbling of the town made her restless, and for the hundredth time she thought over the many difficulties that lay before her. She was indeed brave, though almost a girl. A sense of determined perseverance, of fighting it out to the end, was strong within her. Like Christian, she met and looked in the face every wild beast in the way, closing her ears to the tempting spirits ; and fearlessly looked ahead, keeping the middle of the path.

“No,” said she ; “I don’t think I am afraid. I shall never be afraid of any thing in this world as long as I have the consolation of my church. Then came a new train of thought ; she tried to imagine what the church and rector would be like. He, of course, could not be as perfect as Dr. Cutler. But then, if he were only a little like him, it would be some comfort. With that the past suddenly rose before her. Burying her face in her hands, she tried to force the vision back ; but with every struggle the sense of her utter loneliness would steal upon her with more force than ever. A longing came to her for a hand to cling to ; for a breast to lean against, under which beats a

heart at once strong and tender. Such a wish even the bravest woman feels sometimes, and most piteously needs. A heart that can comfort and uphold ; not with the strength of another woman like herself, but with the power of a man, encouraging her to overcome weakness and fight out the sore battle of life a little longer. Alas ! the night seemed to lend its shadow to the dullness of the picture ; for there appeared to be nothing in the future for poor Edith but disappointment, loneliness, and trials. At length, exhausted by these conflicting emotions, rest came to that weary and sorely-tried brain, and dreamless sleep relieved the misery of that first night in her new home.



## CHAPTER XXIII.

" So the dreams depart ;  
So the fading phantoms flee ;  
And the sharp reality  
Now must act its part."

WESTWOOD'S *Beads from a Rosary.*



HE sun was well up before Edith awoke from heavy slumber, oppressed with the feeling of being borne down by an irresistible weight of trouble. It was some moments before she could collect her bewildered ideas. The strangely unfamiliar room ; its four blank white walls ; the cheerlessness of the uncurtained windows ; the dismantled look of the toilet-table, every thing was so odd and cold that Edith was convincing herself she was dreaming, until reality was established by Lena kissing her and begging to have the trunks opened, so that she could get her dolls, and introduce them to her new house. There was too much worldly life in that appeal

to allow of further inactivity. There stood the trunks and valises to be unpacked, and Norah was bustling to and fro in the next room, finding fault with every thing she touched. The poor old nurse was in great distress, wondering how she could ever have any order in such a cramped-up place. It was necessary for Edith to be up and superintending with her calm decision and encouraging smile. This necessity for action was the kindest boon that could have been granted her. She dressed as quickly as she could, laughing with Lena at the numerous mishaps which occurred ; for, as usual at such times, every article she required was in the wrong place. By the time her toilet was finished, the room had quite a homelike appearance, inasmuch as she had, meanwhile, taken the different pretty knick-knacks out of the trunks, and placed them on the mantel and dressing-tables. Henry had arranged some flowers that they had brought from home ; and Lena, conveying her papa's and mamma's pictures from the depths of the trunk, now placed them on either side of the vase that held the flowers. Then clapping her hands, she ex-

claimed, "O mamma! now it begins to look like home."

Edith drew up the shade and looked out upon the street. It did not present a very attractive appearance, and as she felt her heart swelling again, she turned to the table and took up one of her volumes of litanies and devotions, and read, "Whosoever will be my disciple must take his cross, take it daily, and so with that burden of suffering follow me." "The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?" "This medicine for my soul, shall I not take it and be healed?" "We are put into the furnace like precious metal, that we may be refined, and so be set hereafter as jewels in the crown of Christ. Therefore, in all hours of darkness, let us wait patiently for the morn. For as truly as He who suffered on earth now reigns and triumphs in heaven, so truly shall there be for you who mourn a day of gladness, peace, and victory." This food for her soul gave her the courage to meet the difficulties which would naturally arise on the first day in an unknown home. Taking Lena by the hand, she descended to the breakfast-room,

where Henry, who awaited them, had been occupied in unpacking many things and arranging them in as homelike a way as possible. He had made the room look decidedly inviting.

Henry's boyish efforts to mitigate the annoyances which were occasioning so much discomfort took Edith by surprise. She saw that the child was trying to lighten her load, while she was dwelling too much upon the past, and failing to look forward to the future with hope—the future of those young lives which God had intrusted to her care as his most sacred gift. And then the thought came o'er her, that now, in very truth, a new life was opening before her, one of probable struggles and trials, in which there would doubtless be but little repetition of the pleasures of her past life of comfort. And this led to the reflection that the rugged declivities and the storms and tempests of bitter experience give tone and character to life, and that early adversity is often a blessing in disguise. It was a consolation to her to recall the remark, said to have been made concerning Bias, the wise Greek, that he himself was the treasure that a whole life had gathered, and

that he represented the wealth of being that a thousand struggles had contributed to form.

And then came Henry's voice. "Mamma, there is a splendid stream the other side of the road. I can see it from the gate. I have been in ever such a hurry getting these things unpacked, so you could go with me after breakfast and see if there are any fish in it. Can we go?"

"But, my boy," answered Edith, more cheerfully than she had spoken for some days, "we must first make acquaintance with our new home. I hardly know what it is like yet. Where is Norah? Come, we must go and help her. This is new work for your old nurse, and I fear she may feel homesick."

"I think she must be homesick already, for she has been scolding away for half an hour, and says the cook doesn't know how to serve a dish for a lady's table. Just come and see the fun, mamma. I know the way, I found out the kitchen the first thing. Fido was hungry, so I helped him eat some breakfast."

They had reached the kitchen by the time Henry had finished his prattle. There they

found Norah, a picture of despair, trying to make the cook understand how to make an omelet, such as she had been accustomed to see in her mistress's house.

"Never mind, Norah," said Edith, "any thing will do to-day—a boiled egg and some nice bread, or toast, will be all we shall require. The cook can easily prepare that, so you come with us ; we want to look around the house and arrange where to put things. We want to be at home as soon as possible."

"At home!" murmured the old woman, wiping the moisture from her eyes, "never! never! until we go to the real home."

The excursion through the various nooks and corners of the house, and the planning for a more comfortable arrangement of the furniture, proved a wise move on Edith's part. The good effects were seen in the interest which was aroused in all as to their immediate surroundings, and soon mental and physical occupation supervened—the very best cure for home-sickness.

## CHAPTER XXIV.

"Our greatest glory is not in never falling, but in rising every time we fall."—CONFUCIUS.

"But Christes love, and his apostles twelve;  
He taught, but first he folwed it himselfe."

CHAUCER.



MONTHS slipped by. Edith endeavored to keep house as economically as possible upon the little ready money she possessed. As yet she had been unable to procure any pupils, and nothing but her own daring, and the strong well-spring of hope that was in her young healthy heart, could have sustained her in what, ten years after, would have appeared to her as a certain downright madness. The hundred labors she went through, weariness of body and travail of soul, their mere record could never bear sufficient witness to them. God had given her not only great strength, but great elasticity of tempera-

ment ; and hence she never lingered long under the fringe of a cloud. She cared not for the comforts and luxuries she had lost, but the pain was in bringing up her children in a condition all but penurious, and deprived of so many advantages which she as a girl had enjoyed. She knew of the unconscious influence of outward things, which affects children, even at an early age, far more than is suspected. She saw all this, knew all they lacked, and would have given any thing to have provided a remedy. Yes, she was bound hand and foot with the iron bands of almost poverty. Able to do nothing for them but love them, she did that, and God only knows how a mother's heart goes out to her children with a perfect torrent of passionate devotedness. How can that love be more beautifully expressed than by these two short lines :—

“ A mother is a mother still,  
The holiest thing alive.”

Look tenderly, dear reader, on this picture of struggles. To some they may appear small. Nevertheless they are terribly true. Thousands of women, well born, well reared, know of such



a phase in life, and happy are they if it ended in youth, while mind and body still had enough vitality and elasticity to endure. Happier still if they feel these trials to be utterly unaccounted for except by a belief in an inscrutable providence, "that shapes our ends, rough hew them how we may."

It was difficult for Edith to keep cheerful as Christmas drew near. The children were anxious to make the usual preparations, and she found it very hard to refuse them any amusement her slender purse could provide; but as Dr. Cutler came before the holidays were ended, every thing finally wore a brighter appearance.

"How much Henry has improved! He will be of great assistance to you by and by," remarked Dr. Cutler, as he and Edith watched the children playing in the snow.

"He promises to be fond of study; but I hardly know how I shall be able to stand his educational expenses. My plans do not meet with entire success."

"Yet I have always found that intense desire transforms possibilities into certainties, and our wishes are but prophecies of the things we are

capable of doing, that is, if we are faithful to ourselves."

"I have been wondering lately if I could not turn my talent for painting to some advantage. There is a very pretty art store in the town. They might sell my sketches for me; and in that way I could attain a little ready money to help our daily expenses; and so when the children are older they could have the advantages they require."

"Most assuredly you could. Have you made any inquiries?"

"No; I have been so unhappy lately. You know I was promised music pupils several times; but they have put me off from time to time with excuses, until I have become perfectly disheartened. It seems as if every thing that I undertake goes to the wall. You see I have but little confidence in my own ability; for you always watched and guided me like a lesser providence, so that I was never conscious of my dependence until I had to depend on myself."

"You have traveled through the White Mountains," said Dr. Cutler, "and must have noticed how the road seems frequently to be

shut in by frowning precipices, to all appearances rendering further progress impossible. But as you neared the obstacles you found the path running gracefully and safely through the gorge. So it is with the fearful obstructions that bid defiance to our progress in life. They are generally only apparent difficulties, and will vanish as soon as we confront them. Let nothing discourage you ; and, depend upon it, no matter how hard it may seem, the Good Shepherd is giving you what is best. The higher things are not gained by success in this world."

"But if I should offer my pictures and they were refused, I should be so discouraged——"

"That you would come home and more earnestly set to work," said her pastor. "It will be the road to your success. Life is too short for us to waste its moments in deploring bad luck. We must pursue success, since it will not come to us. This chance of work has been put in your way, and I see in it a means of future happiness. If it do not succeed, it will at least drive off this ennui, which is creeping over you, and which is a most dangerous enemy, if it once gets hold. Bring me some of your

sketches. I remember watching your efforts (and very rough they were), when you were no older than little Lena."

"I think you will pass the same judgment on them now," said Edith smiling, as she turned over some drawings on the table.

"Ah! let me see," he said, selecting one, while his countenance showed evident tokens of surprise and gratification. It was an accurate picture of the interior of his church.

"Yes," sighed Edith. "All my sweetest thoughts are connected with that hallowed spot; and could I have the comfort of my church here, it would make life so much easier."

"But you surely have your church. It is not closed, is it?"

"No; but it is not like ours at home. In the first place there is no life about it. Dr. Lewis is one who takes little thought outside of his study. He leaves it to the congregation to do the work, and consequently there is no real work done."

"Why, I am greatly surprised; I always considered him a good worker. I know he is clever."

“As to that, I think that you are right. He is clever ; but a clever man is not necessarily a wise one, and you will see for yourself what a state the church is in here. Every thing is conducted in a very careless manner. There is a great want of reverence in the congregation. It really shocked me at first. Then the church is never open, except Sundays. I asked one of the ladies, a Mrs. Green, if they did not have evening prayer every day, and she looked perfectly amazed, and said they ‘were not Puseyites.’ I answered that, ‘going to church daily did not necessarily constitute Puseyism, and I considered it necessary to have the church always open, accessible to any one who wished to take advantage of silent prayer. In order that a Church should prosper, its services should be conducted as nearly as possible in accordance with a liberal interpretation of the rubrics of the Anglican Church.’ That made her perfectly savage. She was not well enough acquainted with me to say what she thought, but has since shown her antipathy in every imaginable way.”

“I do not think you acted wisely ; not but that your principles are right ; but, being a

stranger, it would have been best to keep your views to yourself until such times as you could use them to advantage."

"But you can hardly appreciate the condition of the parish, Doctor; and all caused by the narrow-mindedness of the people. They asked me to take a class in what they called a Sunday-school; so I went, and found they had no proper room, but held the school in the church. The children laughed and talked, and seemed to have no regard for the sanctity of the place. Mrs. Green was, to all appearances, the head, and I again got in her black book by asking if we could not get a room to hold the school in. She said it had always been conducted there, and she saw no reason for any change. One of the younger teachers was in favor of my plan, but it has only caused hard feeling, and I do not see a chance of success. The parish is in a lamentable condition."

"And do you think you are bettering it by getting into discussions with the supporters? I fear you are sapping what little strength it has. If you wish to open the eyes of these people, make friends with them, and then they will lis-

ten to your suggestions. Do not push your views forward. It will appear like seeking notoriety. And above all things never assume the air of championship, but that of retiring modesty. Do your best, without thinking of brilliant success. God helps those who do so work."

"I am sure, Doctor, I meant all for the best; but it makes me almost disheartened to see those children being brought up in the way they are; really nothing done for their improvement. I am perfectly powerless; but if I had means I would build a Sunday-school room for them."

"Ah! I am afraid you are too impatient, and anxious for immediate results. This trial will train you for better efforts. Let me read you a few lines," and the Doctor took up a Bible and read these words: "Know ye not that they who run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize. So run that ye may obtain. And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown, but we an incorruptible.' Be steadfast in your faith; watch over your heart, and believe steadfastly in

things that are invisible ; for the lusts of this world are deceitful above all things."

" I experience this constantly ; and I knew how wicked it was to feel as I did toward Mrs. Green. But there was no one to whom I could go in my trouble ; so I thought it best to leave things as they were, for my small influence would be of no avail."

" When you were a child do you not remember dropping stones in a pond. The watery circles thus described increased and widened ring beyond ring, till they reached the utmost limits the banks would allow. So it is with an energetic nature, bent on doing good. It will find its range of benevolence extending day by day, and by persevering it will comprise a thousand new objects of which it had hitherto taken no thought. Let there be thorough consistency in all your undertakings, and by degrees these very people who would now oppose you will long for what they call innovations. Your labor must be like the sun's rays, given out freely and expecting no return. The first step you must take in your attempt to carry Christ's doctrines into practice, is to fight



a decisive battle with your own selfishness. We all must begin where Christ began,—at the cross. From that eminence of suffering love, he taught that self-denial was indispensable to a holy life.”

“Surely, Doctor, I am willing to deny myself every thing. How do you mean that I am selfish?”

“You will find in Christ’s ‘sermon on the mount,’ that he lays down the cardinal doctrine of his kingdom as complete unselfishness; and assures all those who try to learn that doctrine that they may look to God for every help they can ever require. The term unselfishness embraces the mortifying of all bad, personal instincts, such as pride, self-satisfaction, jealousy, or any feeling that may tend to self-defense. Our whole nature must be love, and love is God. If you wish to be like God, Christ suggests one motive,—the reproduction of the nature of God. ‘Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect.’ ‘Love your enemies; bless them that curse you; do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you.’”

“Then I fear I have a hard task before me. I am not good enough to quietly endure Mrs. Green's opposition.”

“You must not begin by putting forth views for opposition. Keep Christ's life constantly before you. He did not begin by abusing his failing disciples. He told them what high things were expected of them. He encouraged them by telling them they were really great; that they were the salt of the earth and the light of the world; yet reminded them that a candle might be put under a bushel. Do you see the difference between the essential and the accidental. You must first encourage those whom you wish to influence, after that they will be directed.”

“It was so little trouble to follow one's duty while under your guidance, Doctor, that I think I was sent away to try my strength. Yet I have proved unequal to the test at the outset.”

“Still, my child, it is better so. Every failure strengthens us. From our earliest infancy to our oldest age, the meaning of the lessons and holy words that we learn becomes more

and more apparent, but the full comprehension comes not until this life is merged in the hereafter of heaven."

Edith enjoyed every moment of the Doctor's visit with that sort of quiet contentment so soothing to saddened temperaments that have been aroused or drawn out for a time. She returned to her duties with renewed vigor, armed to meet all provocations. Mrs. Green soon after set afloat various malicious reports concerning Edith ; but Edith, amid them all, maintained a quiet dignity, and thus the shafts that had been feathered for Edith's discomfiture were turned from their destination. In time many of the parish matters were revised. The school was found too large to be accommodated in the church, and a convenient room for it was procured until such time as a parish house could be built. Edith's work made her many friends, and her firm gentleness won the hearts of the children. They became orderly, and by interesting them in the music and church services, they became reverential. After a while it was no uncommon thing to hear the church bell on week-days.

## CHAPTER XXV.

"In whatever is an object of life, in whatever may be infinitely and for itself desired, we may be sure there is something of divine, for God will not make any thing an object of life to his creatures, which does not point to, or partake of, himself."



TIME accustoms one to changes. Years passed on in the daily routine of Edith's life. Her innumerable occupations served to soothe and sustain her. She saw a chance of success in the path she had marked out for herself; and that was the secret of her serenity of spirit. Her firm, upright intention and force of character were felt far beyond her own perception. Indeed she knew not that she had personal influence at all, but went on in her own straightforward humility. There were times when her burden pressed sorely, and the monotony of her daily labors seemed almost unbearable—times when the tempter would whisper "turn;" but she would

check the thought and pray for God's grace, and strength sufficient to follow her star of fate through the wilderness. With time the struggle grew less severe, and a trustful piety settled around that home. And home it truly was : for in the small family circle, the gentle, submissive bearing of that loving mother was sufficient to surround it with an unspeakable calm. She had a soothing influence like the parting sunlight, or the voice of doves heard at evening—an influence that

“ Droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven  
Upon the place beneath.”

Edith never was lonely. Her children were her constant companions. She never allowed them to see a regretful look upon her face ; and, from living so entirely wrapt up in them, her former life had come to be a dream of the past. The home had assumed a different appearance since we first saw the cold, blank walls. Every thing was simple but tasteful. A look of refinement pervaded the atmosphere, and the pretty sitting-room, with its delicate blue furniture was a picture. It was there Edith

did her painting, while Henry and Lena studied their lessons. In this charming retreat we find her one evening, just before the lamps were lighted. She had left her table and was standing anxiously by the window. Turning nervously to Lena, she said :

“Lena, dear, I cannot understand what has delayed Henry so. It is some hours since I sent him for the mail. Run and ask Norah if she had not better go after him.”

“Now, ma'am, what are you fretting about that boy for?” said the old nurse as she entered with Lena. “He is getting old enough to take care of himself; and even if he wasn't, don't every man, woman, and child know Mrs. Gantly's son; for, bless him, he's the finest boy in town.”

“But, Norah, it's getting dark, and then he was in such a hurry to get back to finish some sketches he was working at.”

“Like as not he has met some of the boys, and they are having a little play.”

“Hardly, Norah; he went for the mail, and he knew I was anxiously looking for a letter from Dr. Cutler.”

"Well, the mail may be late ; but if it will quiet you, I will just go and look for him."

Turning again to the window, Edith put up her hands in alarm, exclaiming : " Oh, Norah, what can be the meaning of that crowd of men coming this way ? "

Before the old woman had time to answer, Henry almost knocked her over as he bounded into the room, and, rushing to his mother, in broken sentences told her there had been a terrible railroad accident, " and there are so many killed, mamma. The houses near the station are crowded, and I told Dr. Lewis to bring one poor gentleman, who seemed almost dead, to our house, for I knew, mamma, that you would take of him." Edith only had time to assure Henry that he was right, as the men reached the house with their sad burden.

" I do declare," exclaimed Norah, putting her glasses on the end of her nose to have a better look at Edith ; " what will you and those children do next ? as if your life had not been sad enough without bringing more death into it ! "

" Norah, do not forget that you are a Chris-

tian. Go to the door immediately and let them take the poor man to Henry's room."

Edith drew Henry and Lena to her, as they heard the heavy tread of the men; and they bowed their heads, as at the approach of death, as the party passed the door.

"Oh, mamma, the scene at the station was frightful. The train has in some way been thrown from an embankment but a short distance from the town, and they are carrying the dead and wounded in as fast as possible."

Henry's further description was cut short by Norah coming back to the room, wringing her hands and announcing, without preface or preparation, that the dead man was "poor, dear, Master Charlie Barclay."

"What!" cried Edith, springing forward and catching Norah by the arm, "are you crazy?"

"Crazy! I wish I was," sobbed she, taking Edith in her arms. "It is Master Charlie as true as I live, and God has sent him to my poor child to bury."

"Have you lost your senses?" cried Edith, sharply, trembling from head to foot.

"It is as true as I am standing here, and Dr.



Lewis, as soon as they have examined him, will tell you so."

"And do you mean that he is *dead*?" cried Edith, with a hollow voice, looking searchingly into Norah's eyes.

But the question was not answered by Norah; for at that moment the door opened and Dr. Lewis came in, accompanied by the physician who had attended the sufferer from the scene of disaster. The latter was a pompous man, whose habit was to indulge in long disquisitions, using many high-sounding technical terms on the probabilities and possibilities of serious results, consequent from his not being called to the patient in time. But for once Dr. Lewis, seeing Edith's too evident struggle for composure, begged of him in as few words as possible to tell Mrs. Gantly if the patient were alive or dead; for from Norah's exclamations he concluded that the gentleman must be a friend of the family.

"I can assure you, Mrs. Gantly, the spark of life has not yet left the frame, but——"

"Very good, very good. Then, Doctor, we will not waste any time talking about it," said

Dr. Lewis, cutting this dissertation short. "We must move quickly. Do you do everything in your power to keep life in your patient, and I will assist Mrs. Gantly in notifying his friends," adding with a smile as he bowed the physician from the room, "I am confident in your showing your usual skill." Returning then to Edith he calmly remarked, "I do not think that there is cause for alarm at present, Mrs. Gantly. Your friend, if such he be, is unconscious, and may not be as seriously injured as we fear. Now tell me, if you can, whom to telegraph, and I will immediately set about it. You have enough to harass you, and must not take this new burden."

"I hardly know what to tell you to do, Doctor," answered Edith in a bewildered manner. "I do not know who poor Charlie's friends are. His father and mother are dead, and until a few moments ago I imagined that he himself was in Europe. But Dr. Cutler must come; we all belong to him," and, shuddering, Edith clasped her hands as if to drive back her grief.

"Then I will send for Dr. Cutler immediately. But is there not some physician that you

would like? Our scanty supply of medical talent is in such demand that I think it would be advisable to call in other assistance."

"Oh, yes. Please tell Dr. Cutler to bring Dr. Sands with him. You know Charlie is a doctor himself," said Edith innocently, for the moment forgetting that Dr. Lewis had never heard of the said Charlie until ten minutes before.

But the Doctor understood her bewilderment. Her life for the last few years had been such an ordinary, every-day affair, with the exception of her financial troubles, that this sudden shock seemed to render her mind almost chaotic. Her thoughts were, in a measure, beyond her control. She could only place her mind on one idea—Charlie was in her house. The last companion of her childhood had come home to her to die. It must be a dream! How could it be true?

## CHAPTER XXVI.

——“Dead calm in that noble breast,  
Which heaves but with the heaving deep.”

TENNYSON.



HEAVY, mournful silence had hung over that happy home for two days. Every one moved quietly. The few orders that were necessary were given in whispers. The sufferer had remained unconscious. With the exception of a vague wandering at times, one would almost believe him dead.

“I wish I had ascertained about the trains,” fretted Edith, as she followed Norah from room to room. She could not rest quietly anywhere. A nurse had been procured, and Dr. Cutler, with the physician, was momentarily expected.

“Now, Mrs. Gantly, I don’t know what to make of you ; fretting yourself to death this way. They telegraphed that they were coming, and so of course they are coming.”

"But, Norah, the nurse says he is growing more restless, and she thinks there is but little hope."

"Don't you know those nurses never have any hope? It would not be proper. They always make the patient out as bad as possible, and then get all the more credit for curing him."

"Norah, what is the use of trying to be so stoical? You are as anxious as I am; and you know I am trying to be cheerful, and have been unusually so. But this suspense is so trying. If Dr. Sands would only come, then I think I should be satisfied."

And it so happened that, turning at that moment toward the door, she met Dr. Sands, as he entered with Dr. Cutler. As the latter took her hands and looked down on her with his anxious and worn face, yet calm as a summer sea, full of the peace "which passeth all understanding," she broke down completely, and cried like a child. The physician followed Norah to the sick room, and in his absence Dr. Cutler ventured to ask how the patient was.

"The physicians have been in consultation

some time," sobbed Edith, "and I have been anxiously waiting for tidings."

"Is he all the time unconscious?"

"As far as we can judge. He sometimes seems to wake a little, but only to fall back into that feverish wandering, followed by exhaustion. The physicians all say that there is imminent danger, unless he gets asleep. It is so hard to think that we can only stand by and watch him die," and losing control of herself, Edith again broke down.

"Do not forget, my child, that God is good, and while it is proper to prepare for the worst, let us hope and pray and work for the best."

"I know it, Doctor, and I fancied all these years of trouble had made me stronger and more trustful. But my old enemy has come back in the presence of this anguish."

"You are trustful, Edith, and wonderfully brave; but I imagine you require rest. We will watch and pray, and, if God sees fit, He will yet restore our brother."

Edith removed her hands from her eyes, and listened for a moment. Then suddenly rising, her whole form trembled. Her quick

ears had caught the physicians' steps. They all three came quietly into the room ; two of them with white hair, and grave, thoughtful faces. The eldest of the two, Dr. Sands, came forward toward Edith, and taking the hand she offered, he kept it in his own while he spoke :

" Our poor Charlie is in a very critical state, but I do not despair, if I can depend on his old constitution and his nurses. Now tell me, has he said anything that you could understand ? "

" Only a word here and there."

" Did you know what they referred to—his early life or something you were not familiar with ? "

" Once he spoke of home ; then he called his mother ; and last night Norah told me he sang part of a song he used to sing with Henry."

" Very good. He is likely to recall his early days and friends ; and having them near him may save his life. Could you nerve yourself to watch his restless sufferings, and not allow yourself to be afraid of his dying ? Do you think you could calmly meet his gaze when he returns to consciousness ? For he will do

so, I am confident, if he can only get asleep within the next six hours."

"Oh, do let me. I know I can."

"You must not undertake this rashly. Your presence may do serious harm in place of good, unless you are prepared."

"You are unwise. Allow me to suggest," remarked the resident physician, "that Mrs. Gantly is not very strong, and has been much overcome by her friend's critical condition; and it is a sad sight to see a friend's life hanging by a thread."

"Very true; but I have great confidence in Mrs. Gantly's power of endurance and self-control," said Dr. Cutler. "I highly approve of Dr. Sands's suggestion."

"Please let me," said Edith with a faint little smile, raising her eyes to her two friends. "I will follow your directions exactly. I can be as calm and composed as you could wish, and then I am always wakeful. You know, Doctor, that I am used to sickness and to death."

These words were spoken with so much pathos, that both the gentlemen turned their eyes from the sad face that looked so calm



notwithstanding the surging pain that was in her heart.

"Would it not be well to rest first?" asked Dr. Cutler.


"I could not sleep. It would rest me to watch him."

"You are right," said Dr. Sands. "With such assistance I have every hope of saving him."

## CHAPTER XXVII.

“ And to his eye

There was but one beloved face on earth,  
And that was shining on him.”

“  F he could but sleep!” Edith seemed to live on those few words, as she sat beside the bed on which Charlie lay. The room was tastefully furnished, and the variety of pretty articles Edith had made from time to time for Henry gave it a very picturesque appearance. Her simple, soft gray dress, and dainty mourning cap, added to her lovely face, in spite of her pale, anxious countenance. Norah found occasion to be in the room almost all the time. She would bring her knitting and sit by the window; but the knitting progressed very slowly. Her time was mostly employed in wiping her glasses. The nurse waited in the room beyond, and relieved Edith when they could induce her to

leave her anxious watch for a few moments. Dr. Cutler was constantly near, encouraging and cheering all with his trustful countenance.

Shaded from the light, that fine manly face moved restlessly to and fro on the pillows, hardly quiet for the space of a moment, while that persistent muttering, so agonizing to the listeners, continued without intermission. At one moment the whisper would be one of intense entreaty, almost heart-rending in its earnestness; the next some passionate expression of wrong, and he would warn every one to keep from him, or they would be burned by the flame that was burning him. Then he would call his mother, and beg her to help him; to put her hand on his head.

Edith would place her cool hand on his brow, and for a moment listen with drawn breath for the answer to the prayer for sleep. But in another moment her heart would sink again, as he would dash her hand from him wildly, declaring in the most passionate manner that she was keeping some unknown one from him—some one whom he seemed to call

from behind Edith's chair. Again and again this was repeated, as she sat beside the bed, unknown to him, in the awful, acute pain of her watching.

So hour after hour passed. At times she knelt beside him and looked into his restless eyes. He would whisper sadly : " All—all are dead. God's will be done," and turn away. Then she would call him by name, and bathing his hot and restless hands, beg of him to remember his playmate Edith. Once he rose and pushed her from him with such force, Norah just caught her in time to save her falling. These hours were, in imagination, ages to Edith, for she could follow him in his wanderings through all the years of their childhood. Certainly nothing was definite or connected, but she could supply all the links that were missing ; and she soon found herself to be the nucleus around which all his thoughts were moving. Scene after scene he lived over again in his delirium. At times he was pitiful, again angry, then troubled, after which a fit of laughing would follow, and a wild burst of song echo through the silent house.

The tears would sometimes gather in Edith's eyes. It was a most terrible ordeal; still that sleep she prayed for came not. Every moment it seemed further off. Dr. Sands changed medicines from time to time, and grew more and more anxious. At last, after some nine hours, Edith thought she perceived a slight change, and motioned to Norah to call the doctor. He came; and after looking intently for a moment, as he held his patient's wrist, he gave a warning glance to Edith and moved from the bed. She remained with her eyes firmly fixed on the all but lifeless face. The lips moved slower and slower. The head gradually sank on one side, and he fixed his eyes steadily on her, and then, softly murmuring, closed them. Could this be sleep! Oh, what a relief to see the lids fall over those restless eyes! Dr. Sands remained motionless by the window. Norah had dropped her work and sat with her hands raised, as if to lower them would awake the sleeper. So in this hushed and breathless silence they waited; no one near the bed but Edith,—she, kneeling with her eyes fixed steadily on that beloved face,

but her spirit communing with God, as she waited patiently His will.

"If he should wake," Dr. Sands whispered to Edith, "let him first look at you."

That "*if* he should wake," was agony to Edith. The night was far advanced, and the intense silence could be almost felt. For days there had been stillness as of night over the house, unbroken except by the delirium of the patient. That was now hushed, and the quiet was that of death itself. Dr. Cutler noiselessly took his post not far from Edith, and watched the sleeping face. Would the waking ever come? Would light come to that dazed brain, or would the waking be in an another world?

Edith hardly moved from her post of duty. Hours passed, and with the exception of that all but imperceptible breathing, the silence was still unbroken. Suddenly a pain seemed to pierce Edith's heart. She thought she perceived a change in the sleeper. Dr. Sands moved toward the bed as if preparing for something. Unconsciously Edith covered her eyes, as if to shut out the sight; but as quickly dropped her hands and waited. A pause in the

breathing came, followed by a sigh, and then, opening his eyes, Charlie gazed intently for a moment at the face that was bending over him, and murmured, "Edith."

Dr. Cutler, approaching, knelt by the bed, and in the presence of this renewed life, slowly and distinctly repeated that beautiful prayer beginning, "Great and mighty God, who bringest down to the grave and bringest up again." So near to the Lord were their hearts lifted up during the utterance of this petition, that for the first few moments that followed the "Amen," there was reflected in those hearts a vision of the heaven of which they were heirs through hope, and they were conscious of a penetrating, as it were, "behind the veil," into the third heaven, when the soul seems to transcend the limitations of space and time, while it communes face to face with the Eternal and the Unseen.

It is of such a condition that Farrar writes when he says : "There are moments when the grace of God stirs sensibly in the human heart, when the soul seems to rise upon the eagle wings of hope and prayer into the heaven of

heavens ; when, caught up, as it were, unto God's very presence, we see and hear things unspeakable. At such moments we live a lifetime ; for emotions such as these annihilate all time. They

“ ‘ Crowd eternity into an hour,  
Or stretch an hour into eternity.’ ”

At such moments we are nearer to God ; we seem to know Him, and be known of Him ; and if it were possible for any man at such a moment to see into our souls, he would know all that is greatest and most immortal in our beings.”



## CHAPTER XXVIII.

" Arrived at last  
Unto the wished-for haven."

SHAKESPEARE.

" Heaven's last best gift, my ever new delight."

MILTON.



HE crisis had passed. None but those who have watched the fierce and awful contest between life and death can tell the magic of those words. It was two days before Dr. Sands would allow Edith to converse with Charlie more than a few moments at a time. He lay there quite still and calm as he followed her every movement about the room. She would sit by his side and comprehend his wishes by his face; and though she looked wretchedly worn and tired, she would not resign her post, but was ever present to cheer him with her sweet refreshing smile, which had never deserted her through her trials. Though slow, Charlie's recovery was

steady, and after a few days he was able to be up and move about the room. Dr. Cutler was overjoyed at getting his boy again, and they passed hours together talking over old scenes. Charlie had traveled all through the Holy Land, and his mind was richly stored with information. He was much altered; there was no doubt of that. His youthfulness was gone, and many a white thread was visible in his hair. But the old expression was in his face, though that creased brow told of many a worldly battle fought and won. The first Sunday after convalescence, Dr. Lewis invited Dr. Cutler to officiate in his church. The children and Norah went with him, and Edith remained with the invalid. She read to him the Church service, and, as she finished the epistle, he asked her to play his old favorite hymn, "Nearer, my God, to Thee." As she finished she saw he was much overcome, and going to his side begged him to try and compose himself, or the Doctor would seriously blame her for imprudence in allowing him to over-excite himself.

"It will do me more good than harm, Edith.

My life for the past few years has been so cold, wandering as I have been, no home ties or pleasures, and now finding myself miraculously brought home to the only friend of my old days,—it is no wonder my heart is full.”

Then with difficulty, for it seemed hard for him to speak out, he told her how he had loved her ; how, from the time he had spoken to her that autumn afternoon, she had been his only thought, no light fancy of sentimental youth, captivated by every face it sees. But his had been the strong love of a just man, choosing one woman out of all the world, and keeping for her sake his heart pure from all alteration and change. He had held himself bound to her by his deep love, bound by a faithfulness perfect as that of the knights of old, asking nothing and yet giving all. Would that there were more such men and more such love in the world !

Taking her hand he held it firmly : “ And now, Edith, you know all, and do you think in time you can love me ? ”

“ Not more than I love you now, Charlie. You told me all you have just said during those

terrible days when I longed and prayed for the life God has so mercifully spared."

And more she told him, though her voice at times broke down in its earnestness.

"Edith, this is more happiness than I deserve. I fear I am still in that delirium," whispered Charlie, as he folded her in his weak arms, strong, however, in the sense of ownership.

"Life has been given back to me in such fullness, and with it the greatest blessing that life can hold. I fear to let you go, Edith, for how could I now live without my treasure."

"You must not think you are getting a treasure, Charlie. Trouble has changed me greatly," answered Edith, while a bright blush spread quickly from cheek to brow under his earnest gaze. "Do you not see the change?"

"Yes. Things are somewhat different from what I should have supposed," and he glanced with a troubled look around the prettily furnished room. "Dr. Cutler has told me all; but I only know one woman whom such trials could make more beautiful and patient. To that one

I owe my life, and now offer this poor return of love."

Edith was overcome with these few words of gratitude, and as she gazed into his eyes as he clasped her in his arms, she saw the earnestness and depth of the love and happiness that lay in store for her.

"Edith," said Charlie just before the church party returned, "the greatest comfort I have had in my wandering life has been in the knowledge that in one dear church at home praise and worship were being offered up in a manner as near perfection as this earth could afford."

"Is not every thing, our own happiness and all else, given to us to turn into praise, Charlie?"

"Yes," echoed Charlie thoughtfully, "and happy are such as can do so."

"If only one could," said Edith sighing.

"You can. Don't say otherwise," exclaimed Charlie. "I know at least that you and Dr. Cutler can."

"Oh yes, he can. It is his secret of joy. To him they are not shadows, but foretastes."

"What a perfect life he leads! I have always thought it must be such a happiness to have power of any kind that can be used in direct service, or actual doing of good."

"And have you not such power? Your profession opens a double field to you. How often the physician can heal the mind as well as the body, and man is born to be a doer of good."

"Edith, I congratulate you on your success," said Dr. Cutler, coming in with the children. "I never saw a church so much improved. You surely have reaped the benefit of your labors, and Dr. Lewis tells me all look to you for advice."

"Yes, it is improved sir; but we have to work very slowly."

"Slow but sure is the safest plan in all things, even in the recovery of our patient here. See how every hour is telling in his favor. However, I may not wait to see the entire cure, for I have been thinking, on my way home, that I must not be idle any longer. The taste of pleasure I have had while being here with you and the children has spoiled me,

I fear, for my lonely home. I am getting old, and these young bright faces are a great help to cheerfulness. Now, Edith, you have done a good work here, can't we induce you to come home? We need you—indeed we do."

"That is exactly my idea, Doctor, you have anticipated my feelings," interrupted Charlie, happiness beaming through his eyes.

"I have asked Edith to let me take her home, and now look for your consent."

The good old man contemplated them in surprise for a moment, then joined their hands, saying, "Take her, Charlie. The dearest wish of my heart is fulfilled. Take her, and never let her know a sorrow you can guard her from. May God bless you both."

Let us linger a moment for a final glance at the girl whom we first met in all the exuberance of youth, and amid the brightness of a happy home. Changed! Yes, she is; but lovelier than of old; that is, lovelier if heavenly patience through trials that purify and exalt can shed over human features something more beautiful than girlish bloom. She encountered difficulties while a mere child, before strength,

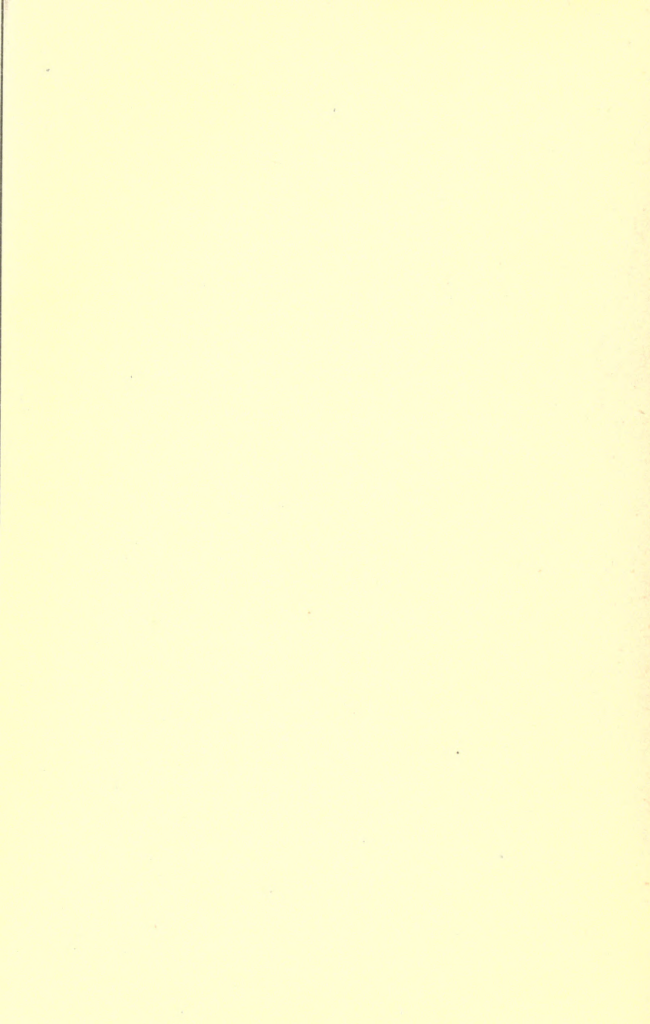
spirits, or judgment were ready for the task. She was borne down by the load of responsibilities with which she was burdened, and was painfully alive to her failures. But she learned to bear her burdens, and the rod and the staff are her comfort. At times her heart had well-nigh fainted, but her faith never forsook her. These things have passed, and their memory is sweetened by thankfulness. In place of the desponding child, there is now the trustful woman. Further trouble may be in store, the clouds may return, but she is safe. Her security is not in freedom from the storm, but in the belief that "God is love."

THE END.















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